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Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy

# Literacy and Lifelong Learning in BC: A Legacy of Leadership

## Interim Report

February 21, 2005

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**This Interim Report to the Premier is sub-titled *A Legacy of Leadership* because this is the most profound conclusion the Panel drew: that, despite our best efforts, there remains an urgent need for bold action if BC is to become the most literate jurisdiction in North America. The challenge before the Provincial government is to lead this action so that it embraces a diverse complexity of interrelated strategies within the context of a coherent Provincial Literacy Framework – supported by an increased magnitude of investment and accountability.**

## Background

> ***"(Your government's) over-riding objective is to help British Columbia realize its full potential as the best place on Earth to raise a family; to live and play; to work, invest and get ahead. To that end, your government has identified five great goals for the decade ahead ... (the first of which is) ...to make BC the best educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent."***
>
> **- Iona Campagnolo, 2005 Speech from the Throne**

The Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy was established in November 2004 to assess the nature and scope of literacy challenges and issues in British Columbia – including a description of the groups and communities whose unmet needs are the greatest – and to develop recommendations for a Provincial Literacy Framework that "builds capacity, forges intersections, and increases profile" for the issue while indicating priorities for potential future investment in BC.

Since November 2004, the Panel has reviewed the numerous research and consultation studies of the past decade, surveyed participants from the Premier's Literacy Summit, listened to community perspectives arising out of the initial work of Literacy Now, and engaged in dialogue with diverse literacy and lifelong learning experts.

## A Compelling Case for Literacy

The Panel applauds the leadership of the Provincial government in making literacy one of its key calls to action. Certainly, literacy and lifelong learning are among the most important legacies we could leave to British Columbians. Having reviewed the abundant literature and facts about literacy development and lifelong learning in BC and Canada, as well as internationally, the Panel confirms that there *is* a compelling case to be made for why literacy should be a priority:

- **It is a surprisingly widespread issue affecting all British Columbians.**
- **BC's economic performance depends on it.**

- **It influences labour market supply and demand.**
- **Employment and earnings are closely linked to literacy.**
- **It impacts our health and quality of life.**
- **It is an issue of criminal justice.**
- **Particular segments of society are dramatically affected.**
- **Some barriers to learning are hidden and require intervention.**
- **Our social and economic prosperity depends on it.**

## Literacy and Life Stages

Recognizing the complexity of the issues, the Panel considered different frames of reference for its deliberations. Ultimately, it decided on a life-stage approach – that is, literacy and lifelong learning as they relate to Children (birth to Grade 3); Youth (Grades 4 – 12); and Adults:

**Children** – There is unassailable research about the critical role of the "early years" in laying the foundation for literacy and lifelong learning – and the learning needs and interests of children are clearly on the public radar screen. In local communities across the province, much has been done to implement appropriate screening processes, develop family resource and literacy programs and organizations, focus attention and reallocate resources in elementary schools, expand professional competencies, adopt best practice research and knowledge, and build partnerships between elementary schools, community organizations, and parents. Much is yet to be done but there is a strong base on which to build.

**Youth** – This is the pivotally important transitional life stage – wherein the literacy skills and learning capacity of our youth will largely determine that of our adults. Evidence suggests that the needs of many youth are not being met. Those "at risk" are "falling through the cracks" and either leaving school early and/or emerging without the expected competencies. Fortunately, intervention may be more straightforward for this age group than it is for the other two. For one thing, youth are a relatively accessible group – with young people either "in one place" (school) or easily accounted for if they're not. Also, unlike the other age groups, there is already a single line of responsibility (i.e. the Ministry of Education) for literacy and lifelong learning among youth.

**Adults** – Most adults do not see literacy as being widespread or personally relevant. The reality is that we all need, albeit variously, to hone our literacy skills and engage in lifelong learning. However, intervention is complicated insofar as adults are an extraordinarily diverse group and contact with them occurs in many Ministries on many fronts. The complexity and magnitude of investment required for this group is enormous – but so are the returns in terms of quality of life, labour force participation, social inclusion, citizen engagement, and economic buoyancy in British Columbia.

## Auspicious Leadership

In reviewing each of the life stages, the Panel discovered that much is in place and has been done to further literacy and lifelong learning. The Provincial government has laid a solid foundation on which it can build. For example:

- British Columbia performs well on ***Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)*** testing. Among the 41 jurisdictions tested, BC ranks 2nd in reading, 4th in math, and 5th in both science and problem-solving.

- According to the 2003/4 results of the ***Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)***, high percentages of Grade Four and Grade Seven students met or exceeded academic expectations: 80% for reading comprehension; 91% and 90% respectively for writing; and 88% and 83% respectively for numeracy.

- In 2002/03, BC had a ***high school completion*** rate of 79%, an increase from 74.8% in 1999/00 and up dramatically since 1992/93 when the completion rate was 67%.

- In BC, ***spending per student*** was the second highest in Canada 1996/7 through 2002/03 and the highest from 1999/00 through 2001/02.

- The ***Early Development Instrument*** (EDI), a key component of the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), has now been applied to the 46,000 kindergarten students in all BC school districts – and provides us with invaluable benchmarks as to children's school readiness.

The Panel is further encouraged by the will of the Provincial government to build on this foundation by exercising strong leadership and taking bold strategic action around these issues. In particular, three profoundly important developments that the Panel feels augur well for progress on these issues are:

1. **Never before has a person of such authority as the Premier flagged literacy as a priority and lent his name and commitment to the issue;**

2. ***2010 Legacies Now*** **provides an appropriate and well-integrated context for positioning literacy and lifelong learning as a compelling issue for all British Columbians; and**

3. **The economic outlook for the province is sufficiently positive to withstand and support particularly bold leadership and investment in this issue.**

While there is a firm foundation on which to build and a strong will on the part of the Provincial government to take leadership on these issues, there remains a need for bold action – and diverse strategies for intervention. It is significant that many of the Panel's recommendations are not new; they dovetail well in intent with the research findings and experts' prescriptions of the past. Despite their soundness, they have either not been implemented or only partially begun. The challenge before the Provincial government is to lead this action so that it embraces a diverse complexity of interrelated strategies within the context of a coherent Provincial Literacy Framework – supported by an increased magnitude of investment and accountability.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The Panel identified a number of principles it views as "givens" that must underlie the Provincial government's approach to these issues:

### A. Position Literacy as an Issue for All of Us

Literacy is a complex issue. It can be seen as a thread, weaving through all aspects of people's lives – their family, their work, their learning, their communities, and society as a whole. Low literacy levels negatively and painfully impact individuals, their families, and our communities. We are all affected by the literacy and lifelong learning abilities of British Columbians across the province. Many of us may even discover the need to further develop our own literacy skills.

### B. Link Literacy to Lifelong Learning

Literacy is not a "now you're done" issue. That is, there is no point at which you become "literate". Rather, there are levels of literacy in different contexts. Many British Columbians, for example, have a strong capacity for literacy and lifelong learning, but need to deepen their skills and knowledge, recoup the skills they've lost through under-use, expand their competence, and become lifelong learners in the context of near-constant change.

### C. Take a Collaborative Approach

In developing a strategic policy framework for literacy development and lifelong learning, we must focus on both individual and collective responsibility and on acting together in a collaborative and concerted fashion. While it is not incumbent on the government to devise and implement and coordinate all literacy development strategies, it is its responsibility to *foster, facilitate, and support* collaboration at all levels.

### D. Build on Strengths and Existing Capacity

A tremendous amount of good work around literacy and lifelong learning has been and continues to be achieved in British Columbia. The Provincial Literacy Framework must be built on the current assets of individual British Columbians as well as the strengths of our existing systems to support literacy and lifelong learning.

### E. Overcome the "Knowing-Doing" Gap

While the Provincial government must recognize and replicate the success of its efforts to date, it cannot become complacent about the areas around which there has been limited success. Many British Columbians do not function effectively and fully in their schools, workplaces, colleges and universities, families, and communities. In this regard, our systems have failed. However, we need not re-invent the wheel. There is considerable research, knowledge, and best practice information about literacy development and lifelong learning for different age groups, people of diverse backgrounds, and individuals facing unique challenges on which we can draw. We know "what" has yet to be done. What we need now is to do it.

### F. Support Individual Initiative

We can initiate social marketing campaigns to convince young people, parents, and adults to act proactively and responsibly on their own behalf, and on behalf of their children, friends, and neighbours. However, the necessary services must be in place to meet this demand. Moreover, we must ensure that all British Columbians enjoy equal opportunities to access and benefit from these services.

On the bedrock of these principles, the Panel developed nine, more focused recommendations. In brief, these include:

1. **Ramp Up Provincial Government Leadership Around Literacy and Lifelong Learning** – The Provincial government must deepen its considerable leadership on these issues at both political and civil service levels. It must make and follow through on difficult decisions about complex issues of responsibility, integration, collaboration, and funding – and do so in a timely manner to ensure momentum on these urgent issues.

2. **Construct an Overall Framework of Outcomes and Strategies For Literacy and Lifelong Learning** - The Provincial government must develop, support, and adequately fund an overall framework, including outcomes, policies, and strategies for literacy development and lifelong learning in BC. It must develop a Provincial Literacy Framework that shapes the work of all ministries as well as the work of the many and diverse service delivery systems in place across British Columbia.

3. **Require Outcomes-Based Accountabilities** - Within the broader context of its Provincial Literacy Framework, the Provincial government must hold each of the service delivery systems (childcare, family services, primary and secondary and post-secondary education institutions, employment readiness agencies, social services, etc.) accountable for achieving specific outcomes within their purview. A single lead Ministry or agency must be held ultimately accountable for progress within the literacy and lifelong learning portfolio – and it would be to this body that all service delivery systems must account for their actions and outcomes.

4. **Strengthen Inter-Ministerial Collaboration** - The Provincial government must appoint a lead Ministry or agency to take overall responsibility for the development, funding, and implementation of operational strategies, programs, and resources for each of the three life stages of children, youth, and adults. These Ministries must work together with other Ministries to ensure coherence across interrelated activities – as required by the single lead Ministry or agency that is ultimately accountable for progress within the over-arching literacy and lifelong learning portfolio.

5. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Children** - In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of children from birth to Grade 3, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part of multiple Ministries. While all of these should be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the lead agency with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for children is in place.

6. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Young People** - In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of youth from Grade 4 to 12, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part multiple Ministries. While all of these should be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the lead agency with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for youth is in place.

7. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Adults** - In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of adult British Columbians, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part of multiple Ministries. While all of these be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the lead agency with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for adults is in place.

8. **Engage Public Support** - The Provincial government must clearly convey to the public – and to specific interest groups within it – the compelling reasons why literacy development and lifelong learning are of critical importance to all British Columbians.

9. **Increase the Magnitude of Investment** - The Provincial government must significantly increase the magnitude of its investment in literacy and lifelong learning. Current levels of funding, however well-intentioned, are inadequate to enable BC to become the most literate jurisdiction in North America – be it by 2010 or even 2015.

## Urgent Priorities for the Long, Mid, and Short Term

In an effort to apply due diligence in setting priorities, the Panel reviewed in detail some 240 recommendations that have been tabled with respect to literacy and lifelong learning over the past decade.

As a means of sifting through the various recommendations it might flag as priorities, the Panel identified four specific criteria against which to gauge and compare how compelling each is. These have to do with:

1. producing some short term "wins"
2. building on current strengths and expanding on the tools and strategies we know are beginning to work
3. addressing legitimate, well-documented gaps and missed opportunities
4. contributing to long term and sustainable change.

**The development and implementation of a bold framework for literacy development and lifelong learning in BC cannot occur overnight. Despite the need for urgency, those strategies which are more likely to produce results in the short term must not eclipse those that may take longer but will ultimately lead to deeper and more sustainable progress. This is not an either/or situation or an issue of what comes first, second, and third. The Panel is resolute that implementation of *all* strategies must begin immediately and concurrently.**

## Long Term: Sustainable Motion (*2 – 4 Years*)

**Develop structures or protocols, for accountable inter-ministerial coordination under the aegis of a "lead" ministry or agency.**

**Rigorously identify measurable outcomes around literacy and lifelong learning.**

**Negotiate internal accountabilities for Ministries, public post-secondary institutions, and community-based agencies.**

**Draft a coherent framework for the seamless and transparent delivery of lifelong learning opportunities and consult with institutions and providers – not so much about what needs to get done (which we already know), but in how best to do it quickly and in a self-sustaining manner.**

**Revisit funding protocols to allow for more sustainable, direct-delivery funding that includes specific outcomes against which performance will be tracked.**

**Work with the federal government to develop thoughtful and well-integrated Federal and Provincial policies, practices, and funding strategies – a Pan Canadian Accord on literacy and lifelong learning.**

## Mid-Term: Momentum (*12 – 24 Months*)

**Create entirely new (and substantial) funding to support and evaluate innovative learner-centered attempts to close known "gaps", particularly where they have arisen from community development initiatives and specifically including:**

- Aboriginal Programming – inclusive, remedial and equity based
- Early childhood interventions for children from birth to Grade 3
- "At risk" youth: alternative schooling, volunteer or work-based programming, tutor/upgrading intervention, library-based interventions
- "School to work" transition strategies (eg. co-op, apprenticeships, CAP)
- workforce literacy and essential skills; expand industry/education partnerships
- Immigrant Programming – inclusive, remedial and equity based
- Learner-centered pilot projects relating to curricula, creative alternative delivery, non-academic outcome measures, etc.
- "Best practices" documentation and dissemination

**Develop and implement a plan for enhancing professional development opportunities, including:**

- Increase training for practitioners involved in early childhood intervention (eg. pre-school teachers, childcare workers, family literacy practitioners, and community-based program staff) to ensure familiarity with the latest research, best practices, and available resources
- Provide training to Grade 4-12 teachers about teaching the "how" as well as the "what" of reading and increase the importance of intervention in these grades
- Support greater interfaces between teachers and the "world of work" so as to enhance the relevance of curricula examples/exercises (eg. job-shadowing, exchange forums, essential skills case studies)
- Develop training and protocols for government employees to enable greater sensitivity and responsiveness to the literacy levels of their client population (eg. use of plain language, understanding of issues, etc.)

## Short-Term Initiatives: Impetus (*6 - 12 Months*)

**Social Marketing/Awareness Campaign**

- Include both print and electronic media; sophisticated and high profile
- Make the compelling case with key, essential messages:
  - for everyone; not just a marginalized issue
  - not just about kids
  - is about lifelong learning and not/just read-write
  - not a philanthropic "do-good" issue but one of personal, social, and economic prosperity
- Position government commitment and strategic priorities
- Tie in with *2010 Legacies Now* initiative (eg. What could leave a better legacy?)
- Tie in with other high-visibility activities and policies (eg. Council of the Federation awards, library services strategy, etc.)
- Entrench BC's leadership position and initiative with rest of provinces and internationally

**Community Development Activity**

- Define "community" in the broadest sense of the word; not just geographic (eg. urban or rural, different regions of the province) but ethno-cultural (eg. Aboriginal, immigrants etc.) and socio-economic (eg. unemployed, parents, people with disabilities, prison inmates, recovering addicts), etc.
- Support the development of Learning Communities throughout BC
- Partner up Literacy Now funding with the Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program (ALCSP) such that there is a joint review committee, some common principles, and an agreement that Literacy Now will fund all ALCSP proposals that have to do with community planning and community-mapping, thus freeing up ALCSP to provide much needed sustainable program delivery funding
- Redefine the role of the Regional Literacy Coordinators as being that of community builders, recruit accordingly, and have them liaise with Literacy Now as well as Literacy BC and the cost-shared projects they support

**Increased Service Delivery**

- Provide sufficient funding to increase the supply of literacy programs for children, youth and adults to close the already-defined service gaps and to accommodate increased demand for services from a more aware and engaged public
- Undertake a full evaluation of college ABE and school division adult high school completion programs, including information on costs, outcomes and results, learner demographics, and availability and consider whether a substantial expansion of college developmental programs should take place outside the block-funding arrangement

**Screening and Assessment** Expand the use of screening, assessment, and evaluation tools for which effectiveness has already been demonstrated, including:

- Build on the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), adding pre- and post- assessment to gauge effectiveness of interventions
- Introduce/evaluate adult assessment tools, including for essential skills – and support pre- and post-testing to evaluate the effectiveness of certain training programs and/or delivery methods in terms of gaining employment, improving productivity, and/or securing promotion

- Develop outcomes-based program evaluation frameworks that capture the needs and interests of learners, of those doing the interventions, and the government department from which funding comes.

**Remove the Most Obvious/Significant Barriers for Adults**

- Provide adult learners with an adequate income and access to childcare, transportation, and counselling services while engaged in learning

**As part of its mandate, the Panel welcomes a role in working with Provincial government Ministries, public education institutions, community-based agencies, and private sector industry to develop and implement its Provincial Literacy Framework as quickly, fairly, and effectively as possible over the coming months. It specifically seeks clarification as to its mandate and authority in this regard – and guidelines around its intended collaborative relationship with Literacy Now and Literacy BC.**

# Literacy and Life Stages

## The Panel's Approach

In preparing this report, the Premier's Panel intends to be very clear that *all* British Columbians have needs and interests relating to literacy development and lifelong learning. As detailed in Appendix D - A Compelling Case for Literacy, the consequences of these issues affect virtually *all* aspects of our society and economy. Accordingly, while typically viewed as being under the aegis of BC's Ministries of Education and Advanced Education, literacy and lifelong learning are actually the purview of key multiple government departments, including the:

Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD)
Ministry of Human Resources (MHR)
Ministry of Health Services
Attorney General
Ministry of Skills Development and Labour
Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services (MCAWS)

Recognizing the complexity of the issues, the Panel considered different frames of reference for its deliberations. These include:

- ***Particular "At-Risk" Groups***: One frame of reference would be to focus on those segments of the population who are particularly at risk for low levels of literacy (i.e. seniors, aboriginals, immigrants, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, etc.) – but doing so undermines the principle that literacy is an issue for all of us. Moreover it isn't instructive insofar as the approach to intervention for Aboriginal children, as an example, might have more in common with that for non-Aboriginal children than it has with older Aboriginals.

- ***Service Delivery Model***: Another frame of reference would be to analyze the issues according to the most problematic aspects of service delivery (i.e. access, equity, cost, etc.) – but this obscures the question of whether we are delivering the right services in the first place.

- ***Geographic Regions of the Province***: A third frame of reference would be to consider each of BC's geographic regions of the province separately – but the Panel determined that regional differences are more germane to the *implementation* than to the *design* of strategic interventions.

- ***Personal, Social, or Economic Impact***: Finally, the panel could have explored the issues of literacy and lifelong learning according to whether their consequences were of a personal, social, and economic impact – but it concluded that all three are inextricably inter-related. This is not strictly a personal, quality-of-life issue. It isn't merely a social equity issue. And it is more profound than any economic issue alone. In equal measure, literacy and lifelong learning are all three.

Ultimately, the panel agreed on another of the alternatives open to them:

- ***Life Stage***. Taken together, life stages comprise all British Columbians and allow for (but do not require) distinctions to be drawn within each life stage around ethnic, regional, socio-economic, and special needs variations where they are relevant. It assumes nothing in terms of what services are to be delivered and how. Moreover, it identifies pivotal learning and developmental moments in all our lives.

Specifically, the panel agreed on three broad life stage groups: childhood, youth, and adults.

## A Starting Point

As a starting point for developing its recommendations, the Panel reviewed: 1) what we know about literacy as it relates to each of the three life-stages; 2) why it makes sense to address literacy in the context of each of these life-stages; and 3) what the gist of intervention might look like for each in terms of:

- Who needs to be considered
- Other, broadest stakeholders to be considered
- Why, in broad strokes, the issues matter
- What are the end results (outcomes) we're seeking to achieve
- How best might we intervene

(Please see Appendix E for a detailed analysis of each life stage.)

### Children (Birth to Grade 3)

Over the past decade, there has been considerable media, public, and Provincial and Federal government attention given to the literacy development and learning needs and interests of children from birth to grade 3:

***What We Know:***

- Literacy development is strongly influenced in the early years by a child's family environment and the educational background of parents. (IALS94)

- Studies show that parents are the most important teachers of their children. Early reading experiences provide positive brain development to start a child's life of learning. (LBC)

- Children acquire their basic cognitive, linguistic and social skills within the context of the family (LBC)

- Economic analyses of government expenditure on early childhood education and care services broadly concur that the investment pays off handsomely in terms of better health for children, readiness for school, stronger educational results and additional income for families. (OECD/1)

- Today, according to 2004 Poverty Profiles of the National Council of Welfare, 1.3 million Canadian children live in low-income households. (LBC)

*Current research suggests that brain development and involvement in literacy activities in the pre-school years is critical to lifelong literacy learning. (NOW)*

*New findings and insights from the neurosciences, health determinant and child development studies have all contributed to the realization that investment in the pre-natal to pre-school period of infants lives is crucial to their development as healthier, more intelligent and productive youth and adults. (Faris)*

***Why it Makes Sense:***
There is unassailable research about the critical role of the "early years" in laying the foundation for literacy and lifelong learning – and the learning needs and interests of children are clearly on the public radar screen. In local communities across the province, much has been done to implement appropriate screening processes, develop family resource and literacy programs and organizations, focus attention and reallocate resources in elementary schools, expand professional competencies, adopt best practice research and knowledge, and build partnerships between elementary schools, community organizations, and parents. Much is yet to be done but there is a strong base on which to build.

***Specific Intervention:***
The "who" of this group are all children, especially children who are at potentially higher risk – including aboriginals, children of new immigrants, those with special needs and/or learning disabilities, those who live in inner city neighbourhoods, children from distressed families, and those whose families live at or below the poverty line.

More broadly, the stakeholders for this group include primary caregivers, preschools and child care service, the elementary school system, the Ministry of Education, and a half-dozen other provincial Ministries.

Literacy among children matters because it is central to this foundational time of learning and of physical, social, emotional and mental development – all of which leads directly to the capacities to be successful in school and fully engaged as adults.

The outcomes we're seeking to achieve by intervening with this group are greater parental involvement, improved school readiness, a more even playing field, and acceptable proficiency levels.

There are numerous possible strategic interventions in programming for this group – including increasing parental and employer awareness, prioritizing preschool and child care services, professional development for children practitioners, specific education reforms, and developing a more rigorous approach to screening, assessment, and intervention.

## Youth (Young People from Grades 4 – 12)

The transitional life stage, the literacy skills and learning capacity of our youth will largely determine that of our adults:

***What We Know:***

- Older children and youth who have not developed a solid literacy base are at risk for school failure and dropout, anti-social behaviour, poverty and risky lifestyles. (LBC)

- Incomplete high school entails several risks. Canadians with less than high school tend to perform more poorly on simple daily literacy tasks than their counterparts in other countries. (IALS94)

*The days of being able to get by with a high school diploma, or less, are essentially over. (BCPB)*

- Census data indicate that the earning power for adults who have not completed high school is particularly limited. (CENSUS)

- The overall high school completion rate has increased to 79% in 2002/03, up from 74.8% in 1999/00 and up dramatically since 1992/93 when the completion rate was 67%. (BCPB)

- Available evidence clearly demonstrates that there is significant variation in achievement from one school district to the next and distinct differences between urban and more remote schools. (BCPB)

- Historically, only 40% of the Aboriginal students who enter Grade eight go on to graduate from secondary school, yet labour market analysts report that more than 70% of new jobs now require candidates to have some post-secondary education or training. (MHR)

*From the student's perspective, I see a lack of access to information about the real world of work – about what it is like in this world, and about the opportunities that really do exist. (John Winter, BCCC - POWER)*

***Why it Makes Sense:***
Evidence suggests that the needs of many youth are not being met. Those "at risk" are "falling through the cracks" and either leaving school early and/or emerging without the expected competencies. Fortunately, intervention may be more straightforward for this age group than it is for the others. For one thing, youth are a relatively accessible group – with young people either "in one place" (school) or easily accounted for if they're not. Also, unlike the other age groups, there is already a single line of responsibility (i.e. the Ministry of Education) for literacy and lifelong learning among youth.

***Specific Intervention:***
The "who" of this group are all young people, especially children who are at potentially higher risk – including boys, aboriginals, offspring of new immigrants, those with special needs and/or learning disabilities, those who live in inner city neighbourhoods, youth from distressed families, and those whose families life at or below the poverty line. Young people who have, for whatever reasons, dropped out of school are also a key at risk group.

More broadly, the stakeholders for this group include young people themselves, parents, peers, public elementary and secondary school systems, youth services agencies, the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education, other provincial Ministries, and industry.

Literacy among youth "matters" because it is central to their crossroad between childhood and early adulthood wherein they are effectively functioning, learning, working, playing, relating, and otherwise engaged as citizens.

The outcomes we're seeking to achieve by intervening with this group are fewer dropouts and higher graduation rates; increased performance in proficiency; better labour market readiness; and personal satisfaction.

Social marketing to young people, engaging them in their communities, strengthening the parent-youth bond, educational reforms, and a greater emphasis on screening, assessment and intervention are a few of the many possible strategic approaches to this group.

## Adults

In viewing all British Columbian adults in a single group, the Panel affirms that we all need, albeit variously, to hone our literacy skills and engage in lifelong learning. However, adults are an extraordinarily diverse group:

***What We Know:***

- Approximately 42% of adults in British Columbia have low literacy skills (using the measure of prose literacy as a opposed to document or quantitative literacy): 19% of British Columbians are at the lowest level of literacy, and another 24% are at the second lowest level. Only 35% of British Columbians are at level 3 – the bare basics for fully functioning in today's society – and only 22% are at level 4 or 5. (IALS94)

*Literacy needs to continue after school and adult literacy development builds on a foundation in the schools and the community. Literacy is an important key needed to access post secondary education, obtain employment, and to fully participate in the community. (NOW)*

- Although individuals aged 25 to 34 are on the whole better educated than any previous generation, a significant number of them have not completed high school. In 2001, about 15% did not have a high school diploma. More young men than women had not completed high school – 17% compared with 13%. The proportion of adults in this age group without a high school diploma declined considerably in the past decade. In 1991, it stood at 25% for men and 21% for women. (Unsourced)

- Less than 44% of British Columbia's working-age population had high school education or less in 2001, down substantially from almost 53% in 1991. (MCL)

*Despite the best efforts of groups like Literacy BC, basic reading, writing, numeracy and other "foundation" skills are lacking in a significant portion of the workforce, both young and old. More emphasis needs to be placed on business-education-community partnerships, workplace literacy models, and best practices by stakeholders. (BCCC)*

- Only a small fraction (estimates range from 5-10% of the general population through to "less than half" who participated in the survey) of eligible adults have ever enrolled in a literacy or upgrading program; among those who do enroll, dropout rates are high at approximately 30%. (ABC/1)

- 43% of survey respondents who don't enroll cite program/policy-related problems such as not being called back by a program contact person, long waiting lists, inconvenient course times, wrong content or teaching structure, and unhelpful program contact. (ABC/1)

- Work and family account for more than half of the reasons (for not following through with an upgrading program) given by 18 – 29 year olds and those over 65. Lack of interest is cited most by 18-29 year olds (14%) and 50-64 year olds (33%). (ABC/2)

***Why it Makes Sense:***
Most adults do not see literacy as being either as widespread or as personally relevant as it is in fact. The reality is that we all need, albeit variously, to hone our literacy skills and engage in lifelong learning. However, intervention is complicated insofar as adults are an extraordinarily diverse group and contact with them occurs in many Ministries on many fronts. The complexity and magnitude of investment required for this group is enormous – but so are the returns in terms of quality of life, labour force participation, social inclusion, citizen engagement, and economic buoyancy in British Columbia.

***Specific Intervention:***
The "who" of this group are all adults, especially who face other personal challenges (eg. mental illness, reliance on social assistance, etc.), those who are facing the need to adapt to their changing communities, workplaces, and society as a whole or those who are of an age or lifestyle more likely to lose their literacy and learning skills.

More broadly, the stakeholders for this group include adult learners, aboriginals, immigrants, people with disabilities, those living in poverty, the various provincial and federal Ministries that serve adults, the secondary and post-secondary education systems, community-based groups, and employers and co-workers.

Literacy among adults matters for a multitude of reasons, including: safer communities, reduced crime, safer workplaces, and safer families; reduced at risk behaviors and the costs associated with them, social cohesion, employability, reduced poverty and reliance on social assistance; increased productivity, innovation, and adaptability; increased quality of life .... and many other consequences.

The outcomes we're seeking to achieve by intervening with this group are improved proficiency levels, better access to programs, increased program take-up, more effective programs, and enhanced awareness.

Not surprisingly given the enormous diversity of this group, there are hundreds of possible strategic approaches that can be taken – as evidenced in Appendix F, a Decade of Policy and Practice Recommendations.

## A Note Regarding Outcomes

At the outset, the Panel agreed that its outcome statements for each life-stage group should describe "what" the measure is (i.e. the language to describe it) rather than the "how much" benchmarks (quantitative values) that should be assigned to each. While the Panel assumed that the "experts" would already have developed credible benchmarks that it could draw from, it later discovered that only 4 of the 240 past recommendations reviewed in Appendix F included reference to specific measures and benchmarks for success.

The Panel understands that there are some outcomes for which meaningful measures cannot easily be developed (eg. parental involvement in children's education, greater inter-ministerial collaboration, etc.) or for which measures cannot be attributed entirely to efforts around literacy and lifelong learning (eg. unemployment rates, GDP per capita, etc.) . It recognizes the danger of compromising the richness of the envisioned "end" (outcome) by over-emphasizing the "means" of measuring it (benchmark).

That being said, the Panel believes the notion and reality of outcomes-based strategies for literacy and lifelong learning merit greater attention.

# A "Reason-Based" Framework for Literacy Development and Lifelong Learning

**This Interim Report to the Premier is sub-titled *A Legacy of Leadership* because this is the most profound conclusion the Panel drew: that, despite our best efforts, there remains an urgent need for bold action if BC is to become the most literate jurisdiction in North America. The challenge before the Provincial government is to lead this action so that it embraces a diverse complexity of interrelated strategies within the context of a coherent Provincial Literacy Framework – supported by an increased magnitude of investment and accountability.**

## Points of Departure: Statements of Principle

Based on its review of the research and its analysis of life-stages – but before reviewing the abundance of specific recommendations that have already been tabled over the years – the Panel used its "reason-based" approach to identify certain principles and "givens" that must underlie and inform all its recommendations.

### A. Position Literacy as an Issue for All of Us:

Literacy is about the capacity of all individuals to:

- read, write, and comprehend
- operate with numbers and technologies
- adapt to and function effectively in a changing society
- engage fully as citizens, learners, workers, and family members

Literacy is a complex issue. It can be seen as a thread, weaving through all aspects of people's lives – their family, their work, their learning, their communities, and society as a whole. Low literacy levels negatively and painfully impact individuals, their families, and our communities. We are all affected by the literacy and lifelong learning abilities of British Columbians across the province. Many of us may even discover the need to further develop our own literacy skills.

As a society, we must support the natural development of literacy and lifelong learning of all our citizens, particularly through reinforcing and supporting the critical roles of parents, preschools, schools, colleges, technical institutes, community-based agencies, and universities. However, this mustn't detract from our responsibility to provide people with low literacy levels with accessible, flexible, and responsive opportunities to close learning gaps.

### B. Link Literacy to Lifelong Learning:

Literacy is not a "now you're done" issue. That is, there is no point at which you become "literate". Rather, there are levels of literacy in different contexts. Many British Columbians, for example, have a strong capacity for literacy and lifelong learning, but need to deepen their skills and knowledge, recoup the skills they've lost through under-use, expand their competence, and become lifelong learners in the context of near-constant change.

For consistency and impact, we must be diligent in our efforts to position literacy development as being on a continuum, directly linked to lifelong learning.

**C. Take a Collaborative Approach:**

Improving literacy and lifelong learning opportunities for all British Columbians requires the action of individuals, non profit organizations, businesses, public institutions, municipalities, communities, Provincial government ministries, and Federal government departments. No one person, organization, or institution can effect change alone. No one level of government can do all that needs to be done.

In developing a strategic policy framework for literacy development and lifelong learning, we must focus on both individual and collective responsibility and on acting together in a collaborative and concerted fashion. While it is not incumbent on the government to devise and implement and coordinate all literacy development strategies, it is its responsibility to *foster, facilitate, and support* collaboration at all levels.

**D. Build on Strengths and Existing Capacity:**

It may be imperfect, but British Columbia already has a rich system of resources, programs, non profit organizations, businesses, and public institutions that support the development of literacy and lifelong learning capacities for citizens of all ages, backgrounds, and geographies. Within this complex system, there is considerable professional knowledge and experience and many and diverse people with a will to act and to champion the issue. Positive changes have been happening and are continuing to happen in many communities, organizations, and institutions.

The Provincial Literacy Framework must be built on the current assets of individual British Columbians as well as the strengths of our existing systems to support literacy and lifelong learning.

**E. Overcome the "Knowing-Doing" Gap:**

While the Provincial government must recognize and replicate the success of its efforts to date, it cannot become complacent about the areas around which there has been limited success. Many British Columbians do not function effectively and fully in their schools, workplaces, colleges and universities, families, and communities. In one way or another, our systems of resources and programs designed to promote and support the literacy and lifelong learning needs and interests of all British Columbians, have failed. From young children who have unequal access to the early learning experiences that prepare them for school through to older workers who are unable to adapt to changing local economies and are facing unemployment and personal dislocation – not all British Columbians share the same opportunities for literacy and lifelong learning in BC.

We need not re-invent the wheel. There is considerable research, knowledge, and best practice information about literacy development and lifelong learning for different age groups, people of diverse backgrounds, and individuals facing unique challenges. The task is one of expanding what we already know works well – and of implementing new and effective strategies around which there is a consensus. That is, we must overcome the "knowing - doing" gap.

**F. Support Individual Initiative:**

Ultimately, learning rests with individuals living in unique family, community, and work-related settings. The Provincial government's actions must begin and conclude with respect for the responsibilities of all British Columbians as valued and important citizens, workers, learners, and members of families and communities.

We can initiate social marketing campaigns to convince young people, parents, and adults to act proactively and responsibly on their own behalf, and on behalf of their children, friends, and neighbours. However, the necessary services must be in place to meet this demand. Moreover, we must ensure that all British Columbians enjoy equal opportunities to access and benefit from these services.

## Focused Recommendations

Following on these principles – and, again, before reviewing the abundance of specific recommendations that have already been tabled over the years – the Panel identified nine, more focused recommendations.

***Recommendation 1:***

**Ramp Up Provincial Government Leadership Around Literacy and Lifelong Learning**

The Provincial government must deepen its considerable leadership on these issues at both political and civil service levels. It must make and follow through on difficult decisions about complex issues of responsibility, integration, collaboration, and funding – and do so in a timely manner to ensure momentum on these urgent issues.

*We know what policies, practices, and educational strategies will improve literacy levels. What we need is the political and professional determination to act on this knowledge.(CEA)*

***Recommendation 2:***

**Construct an Overall Framework of Outcomes and Strategies for Literacy and Lifelong Learning**

The Provincial government must develop, support, and adequately fund an overall framework, including outcomes, policies, and strategies for literacy development and lifelong learning in BC. It must develop a Provincial Literacy Framework that shapes the work of all ministries as well as the work of the many and diverse service delivery systems in place across British Columbia.

*Literacy should not be seen as a policy issue in isolation, but as an integral component in all social, economic and cultural policy. We need to look at policy issues through a "literacy lens". Canada needs collaborative and coordinated literacy leadership to overcome the shortsightedness of a fragmented approach and to fashion a coherent and comprehensive agenda for literacy. (CEA)*

*Governments, employers, unions, educators, academic researchers, non-governmental organizations, community representatives, and Canadians all recognize that to meet the challenges of a global knowledge-based economy in the 21st century, a focus on literacy must be a fundamental element of our strategy. (PAN/2)*

***Recommendation 3:***

**Require Outcomes-Based Accountabilities**

Within the broader context of its Provincial Literacy Framework, the Provincial government must hold each of the service delivery systems (childcare, family services, primary and secondary and post-secondary education institutions, employment readiness agencies, social services, etc.) accountable for achieving specific outcomes within their purview.

Embedding literacy and lifelong learning policies and practices across multiple ministries may obscure the accountability of any one driving force. A single lead Ministry or agency must be held ultimately accountable for progress within the literacy and lifelong learning portfolio – and it would be to this body that all service delivery systems must account for their actions and outcomes.

For each of the obvious alternatives for lead ministry or agency, there are pros and cons in terms of messaging and influence. The Provincial government will have to weigh these carefully before making and then sticking with a decision.

*For a country to prosper in the new economy, it must have decision-making structures through which all stakeholders can accept responsibility and work together as required to create the conditions necessary for growth and wealth creation. (STEP)*

***Recommendation 4:***

**Strengthen Inter-Ministerial Collaboration**

The Provincial government must appoint a lead Ministry or agency to take overall responsibility for the development, funding, and implementation of operational strategies, programs, and resources for each of the three life stages of children, youth, and adults. These Ministries must work together with other Ministries to ensure coherence across interrelated activities – as required by the single lead Ministry or agency that is ultimately accountable for progress within the over-arching literacy and lifelong learning portfolio.

*Sorting out and agreeing on roles is key to progressing; the real challenge is moving ahead and taking responsibility. (Kerry Jothen, POWER)*

***Recommendation 5:***

**Develop a Coherent Strategy for Children**

In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of children from birth to Grade 3, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part of the Provincial Ministries of Education, Child and Family Development, Health Services, Human Resources, and Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. While all Ministries should be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the lead agency with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for children is in place.

*A proper diet, sufficient nourishment, and a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment during childhood contribute to successful literacy learning. Developmental delays and sensory problems affect readiness to learn as well; screening programs for newborns and young children can often identify these problems and pave the way for intervention that can minimize their effect on learning.(CEA)*

***Recommendation 6:***

**Develop a Coherent Strategy for Young People**

In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of youth from Grade 4 to 12, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part of the Provincial Ministries of Education, Advanced Education, Child and Family Development, Health Services, Human Resources, Skills Development and Labour, and Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. While all Ministries should be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the "lead agency" with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for youth is in place.

*During the school years, many factors influence the development of literacy. Such factors include: the degree to which teachers have specialized training in reading instruction; the presence of a demanding reading curriculum; diagnostic resources to identify students who are struggling and the provision of additional help for them; a thoughtful assessment system; smaller class sizes in elementary grads; a positive and productive classroom climate; and the expectation that all students will learn to read. Peer interactions also play a role. (CEA)*

***Recommendation 7:***

**Develop a Coherent Strategy for Adults**

In creating a coherent set of outcomes, policies, and strategies to support the literacy development and learning of adult British Columbians, the Provincial government must ensure collaborative action on the part of the Provincial Ministries of Education, Advanced Education, Child and Family Development, Health Services, Human Resources, Skills Development and Labour, and Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services. While all Ministries should be held accountable for specific outcomes within their purview, a single Ministry must be designated as the lead agency with which ultimate accountability rests for ensuring a coherent strategy for adults is in place.

*In a knowledge-driven society learning – the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values – is key to individual development, economic competitiveness and social inclusion – the objectives of democratic societies everywhere. (Faris)*

***Recommendation 8:***

**Engage Public Support**

The Provincial government must clearly convey to the public – and to specific interest groups within it – the compelling reasons why literacy development and lifelong learning are of critical importance to all British Columbians. It must also develop and support champions who can advocate for literacy and lifelong learning at all levels, sectors, and communities – making a consistent strategic case for its importance and relevance to all.

*British Columbia needs a way of life that values, fosters, and celebrates lifelong learning in all its forms whether in the home, the community, at school or work – for all its people. (Faris)*

***Recommendation 9:***
**Increase the Magnitude of Investment**

The Provincial government must significantly increase the magnitude of its investment in literacy and lifelong learning. Current levels of funding, however well-intentioned, are inadequate to enable BC to become the most literate jurisdiction in North America – be it by 2010 or even 2015.

*Despite the clear benefits of action, the existing literacy system is woefully inadequate to handle the need. The lack of consistent and adequate funding, vision, strategy, and coordination has meant that literacy needs have tended to "fall through the cracks". (MCL)*

*Over the coming years, significant energies and funding will need to be invested in the field to create a universal system in tune with the needs of a full employment economy, with gender equity and with new understandings of how children develop and learn. (OECD/1)*

# Reflections on a Decade of Policy and Practice Recommendations

## The Knowing Doing Gap

As they are not experts, Panel members took a "reason-based" approach to the issues of literacy and lifelong learning. Deliberately, much of their preliminary thinking about the 6 principle-based points of departure and 9 more focused recommendations occurred independent of the influence of previous consultations and recommendations. That is, the Panel did not consult the prior work of experts until after forming its own impressions. Only then did it compare its conclusions with those of the experts' more exhaustive examinations and prescriptions.

As evidenced in Appendix F, an abundance of research and consultation reports over the past decade or so have produced a massive inventory of recommendations for change to improve the system of resources, programs, and organizations and institutions that support the literacy development and lifelong learning of British Columbians of all ages, backgrounds, and geographies.

The Panel's comparison of its own "reason-based" impressions with the far more specific and detailed conclusions of experts yielded three key insights:

1. That their own conclusions dovetailed well with the conclusions and recommendations of past experts and that these are reasonable

2. That many of these recommendations have not been implemented or, at best, insufficiently implemented and that while there has been progress – particularly for children from birth to Grade 3 – not much and not enough has changed for young people and adults

3. That there hasn't been enough thought applied to the meaningful, measurable outcomes we are seeking to achieve

Given that we appear to know what needs doing based on this wealth of literature, the Premier's Panel sought to understand why we have failed to act in concerted and forceful ways – and how the current Provincial government can achieve greater effect.

The questions emerged more pointedly: "***Why have we not implemented what we know and have learned?***" and "***How can we be certain the same won't happen to this report as has happened to others?***"

## Creating the Conditions for Success

To explore these questions further, the Panel identified what conditions have been in place to encourage and support progress on these (or any) issues – and what dynamics have been at play to impede progress. It urges the Provincial government to ensure that impediments are removed and conditions are in place to support change.

## Support for Change

*The conditions that appear to work for and promote change, and which the Provincial government should attempt to foster, include:*

- ***Awareness***: Effective dissemination of unassailable research on the importance of literacy development and lifelong learning at different periods of people's lives results so as to draw local, provincial, and national media, political, and public attention to these issues
- ***Public Priority***: Literacy development and lifelong learning as seen by the public to be a significant enough priority to demand action around the issue
- ***Consumer Expectations***: Vocal expression from the people directly served by particular parts of our systems for more choices, flexibility, innovation, open access, and increased effectiveness
- ***Responsiveness and Engagement***: Close attention to the issues that generate collective passion, both individually and collectively – particularly where there is commonality of interests across individuals, families, communities, and diverse private businesses, non profit organizations, and public institutions
- ***Outcomes-Based Benchmarking***: Ongoing assessments of the successes and failures of achieving literacy development and lifelong learning outcomes (eg. Grade level testing), allowing for compelling comparisons of what is being achieved across British Columbia relative to what is being achieved elsewhere in the country and around the world
- ***Recognition and Support***: Drawing attention to and valuing the work of literacy development and lifelong learning champions in local communities, school district and post-secondary educational institutions, Provincial ministries, not-for-profit organizations, and industry

## Impediments to Change

*The conditions that appear to work against and resist change, and which the Provincial government must attempt to diminish, are:*

- ***Neglect of Public Awareness***: Limited attempts to correct misinformation among the public about literacy issues (eg. attributing it to individual failure or multiple stereotypes)
- ***Absence of Leadership and Accountability***: Lack of strong and consistent leadership around the outcomes, strategies, and the unwillingness or inability to be held publicly accountable for the efficacy of these
- ***Re-inventing the Wheel***: Limited interest in implementing what is already known about learning barriers and best learning practices (by other people)
- ***Complacency***: Traditional ways of thinking, funding, and acting, and the tendency of all organizations, whether non profit, private, professional, or public, to resist change
- ***Internal Misalignment***: Conflicting objectives and policies across Provincial government ministries (eg. reducing the numbers of people on social assistance while also providing adequate income supports for adults with low literacy skills who are ready to return to school), and lack of an overall framework for literacy development and lifelong learning outcomes and strategies
- ***Half-Hearted Collaboration***: Multiple players and interests at both policy and delivery levels with seemingly contradictory interests and objectives, diverse ways of working, and a conditional commitment to working together locally and provincially

- ***Professional Development***: Increased professional competencies and the implementation of new knowledge and best practices within particular resources, programs, organizations, and institutions promoting literacy development and lifelong learning

- ***Neglect Around Professional Development***: Inattention to building the professional competencies of individuals within our various systems to support literacy development and lifelong learning

- ***Sustainable and Effective Funding***: On-going, flexible, and adequate funding for literacy development and lifelong learning resources and programs

- ***Inappropriate Funding***: Funding that is inadequate, inconsistent, inflexible, or otherwise ineffective according to clear outcomes

- ***Hope***: Some sense of hope, often based on particular and publicly acknowledged successes, that maintains both momentum and motivation toward other successes

- ***Sense of Discouragement:*** Lack of hope, based on years of struggle to make a real difference in people's lives

# Urgent Priorities for the Short, Mid, and Long Term

**Principles:**

A. **Position Literacy as an Issue for All of Us**

B. **Link Literacy to Lifelong Learning**

C. **Take a Collaborative Approach**

D. **Build on Strengths and Existing Capacity**

E. **Overcome the "Knowing-Doing" Gap**

F. **Support Individual Initiative**

**Focus:**

1. **Ramp Up Provincial Government Leadership Around Literacy and Lifelong Learning**
2. **Construct an Overall Framework of Outcomes/Strategies for Literacy/Lifelong Learning**
3. **Require Outcomes-Based Accountabilities**
4. **Strengthen Inter-Ministerial Collaboration**
5. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Children**
6. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Young People**
7. **Develop a Coherent Strategy for Adults**
8. **Engage Public Support**
9. **Increase the Magnitude of Investment**

Having identified its recommendations in broad strokes, verified the "fit" between these and those of the many "experts" who have tackled the issue of literacy and lifelong learning in BC over the past decade or so, the Panel attempted to distill its thinking around the priorities government must address.

## Criteria for Selection

As a means of sifting through the various recommendations it might flag as priorities, the Panel identified four specific criteria against which to gauge and compare how compelling each is. These have to do with:

1. producing some short term "wins"
2. building on current strengths and expanding on the tools and strategies we know are beginning to work
3. addressing legitimate, well-documented gaps and missed opportunities
4. contributing to long term and sustainable change

## Time Frames

**The development and implementation of a bold framework for literacy development and lifelong learning in BC cannot occur overnight. Despite the need for urgency, those strategies which are more likely to produce results in the short term must not eclipse those that may take longer but will ultimately lead to deeper and more sustainable progress. This is not an either/or situation or an issue of what comes first, second, and third. The Panel is resolute that implementation of *all* strategies must begin immediately and concurrently.**

## Long Term: Sustainable Motion (*2 – 4 Years*)

**Engage the Panel and appropriate Ministries to:**

| | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Develop structures or protocols, for accountable **inter-ministerial coordination** under the aegis of a "lead" ministry or agency | **A, B, C, D, E, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9** |
| ▪ Rigorously identify **measurable outcomes** around literacy and lifelong learning | **C, D, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9** |
| ▪ Negotiate **internal accountabilities** for Ministries, public post-secondary institutions, and community-based agencies | **C, D, E, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9** |
| ▪ Draft a **coherent framework** for the seamless and transparent delivery o f lifelong learning opportunities and consult with institutions and providers – not so much about what needs to get done (which we already know), but in how best to do it quickly and in a self-sustaining manner | **A, B, C, D, E, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9** |
| ▪ Revisit **funding protocols** to allow for more sustainable, direct-delivery funding that includes specific outcomes against which performance will be tracked (i.e. no more "drive bys") | **D, E, F, 1, 5, 6, 7, 9** |
| ▪ Work with the federal government to develop thoughtful and **well-integrated Federal and Provincial policies**, practices, and funding strategies – a Pan Canadian Accord on literacy and lifelong learning. | **C, D, E, 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9** |

## Mid-Term: Momentum (*12 – 24 Months*)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Create entirely new (and substantial) funding to support and evaluate innovative learner-centered attempts to close known gaps, particularly where they have arisen from community-development initiatives and specifically including:**<br>▪ Aboriginal Programming – inclusive, remedial and equity based<br>▪ Early childhood interventions for children from birth to Grade 3<br>▪ At risk youth: alternative schooling, volunteer or work-based programming, tutor/upgrading intervention, library-based interventions) | **C, D, E, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9** |

- "School to work" transition strategies (eg. co-op, apprenticeships, CAP)
- workforce literacy and essential skills; expand industry/education partnerships
- Immigrant Programming – inclusive, remedial and equity based
- Learner-centered pilot projects relating to curricula, creative alternative delivery, non-academic outcome measures, etc.
- "Best practices" documentation and dissemination

**Develop and implement a plan for enhancing professional development opportunities, including:** **B, D, E, 1, 6, 7, 9**

- Increase training for practitioners involved in early childhood intervention (eg. pre-school teachers, childcare workers, family literacy practitioners, community-based program staff) to ensure familiarity with the latest research, best practices, and available resources
- Provide training to Grade 4-12 teachers about teaching "the how" as well as "the what" of reading and increase the importance of intervention in these grades
- Support greater interfaces between teachers and the "world of work" so that they can increase the relevance of curricula examples/exercises (eg. job-shadowing, exchange forums, essential skills case studies)
- Develop training and protocols for government employees to enable greater sensitivity and responsiveness to the literacy levels of their client population (eg. use of plain language, understanding of issues, etc.)

## Short-Term Initiatives: Impetus (*6 - 12 Months*)

**Launch a comprehensive social marketing/awareness campaign:** **A, B, 1, 2, 8**

- Include both print and electronic media; sophisticated and high profile
- Make the compelling case with key, essential messages:
  - for everyone; not just a marginalized issue
  - not just about kids
  - is about lifelong learning and not/just read-write
  - not a philanthropic "do-good" issue but one of personal, social, and economic prosperity
- Position government commitment and strategic priorities
- Tie in with *2010 Legacies Now* initiative (eg. What could leave a better legacy?)
- Tie in with other high-visibility activities and policies (eg. Council of the Federation awards, library services strategy, etc.)
- Entrench BC's leadership position and initiative with rest of provinces and internationally

**Community Development Activity – Literacy Now** **A, B, C, D, 1, 2, 8**

- Define "community" in the broadest sense of the word; not just geographic (eg. urban or rural, different regions of the province) but ethno-cultural (eg. Aboriginal, immigrants etc.) and socio-economic (eg. unemployed, parents, people with disabilities, prison inmates, recovering addicts), etc.

- Partner up Literacy Now funding with the Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program (ALCSP) such that there is a joint review committee, some common principles, and an agreement that Literacy Now will fund all ALCSP proposals that have to do with community planning and community-mapping, thus freeing up ALCSP to provide much needed sustainable program delivery funding
- Redefine the role of Regional Literacy Coordinators as being that of community builders, recruit accordingly, and have liaise with Literacy Now as well as Literacy BC and the cost-shared projects they support

**Increased Service Delivery** **D, E, 5, 6, 7, 9**

- Provide sufficient funding to increase the supply of literacy programs for children, youth and adults to close the already-defined service gaps and to accommodate increased demand for services from a more aware and engaged public
- Undertake a full evaluation of college ABE and school division adult high school completion programs, including information on costs, outcomes and results, learner demographics, and availability and consider whether a substantial expansion of college developmental programs should take place outside the block-funding arrangement

**Screening and Assessment** Expand the use of screening, assessment, and evaluation tools for which effectiveness has already been demonstrated, including: **B, D, 1, 3, 5, 6, 7**

- Build on the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), adding pre- and post- assessment to gauge effectiveness of interventions
- Introduce/evaluate adult assessment tools, including for essential skills – and support pre- and post-testing to evaluate the effectiveness of certain training programs and/or delivery methods in terms of gaining employment, improving productivity, and/or securing promotion
- Develop outcomes-based program evaluation frameworks that capture the needs and interests of learners, of those doing the interventions, and the government department from which funding comes.

**Remove the Most Obvious/Significant Barriers for Adults** **E, F, 1, 3, 4, 7, 9**

- Provide adult learners with an adequate income and access to childcare, transportation, and counselling services while engaged in learning

**As part of its mandate, the Panel welcomes a role in working with Provincial government Ministries, public education institutions, community-based agencies, and private sector industry to develop and implement its Provincial Literacy Framework as quickly, fairly, and effectively as possible over the coming months. It specifically seeks clarification as to its mandate and authority in this regard – and guidelines around its intended collaborative relationship with Literacy Now and Literacy BC.**

# Acknowledgements

The Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy gratefully acknowledges the following for their contributions during the process:

**Gavin Perryman** for facilitating the Panel's discussions – providing them with a format for addressing complex issues and then distilling down many of their conclusions.

**Stacey Huget** for doing all background research and analysis for the Panel and for writing this Interim Report.

**Paul Goyan**, **Cheryl Bell**, and **Ruth Derrick** of the Private Institutions and Developmental Programs Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education for freely sharing with the Panel their insights and experience with literacy and lifelong learning issues and with the process of policy change within government.

**The staff at Literacy BC** for providing administrative and logistical support to the Panel throughout their deliberations.

# APPENDIX A:
# Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy

*Appointed November 3, 2004, these are the members of the Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy:*

**Linda Mitchell**, who chairs the Panel, is Executive Director of Literacy BC – the provincial network of organizations and individuals promoting and supporting literacy and learning. She has developed key literacy initiatives, partnerships and networks throughout the province in workforce education, regional development, practitioner training and learner involvement/. Mitchell is a member of the BC Chamber of Commerce's education committee, and sits on national advisory committees related to literacy and technology, literacy research, health and workforce education. She has been a driving force behind the literacy golf tournaments founded by Peter Gzowski, which have raised over $8 million for literacy across Canada.

**Paula Amos,** of North Vancouver, is Executive Director of the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC. Amos, who was raised in Nuu-cha-nulth territory on Vancouver Island and is of Hesquiaht and Squamish Nation descent, is a member of the steering committees of the Blueprint Strategy for Aboriginal Tourism and the North American Indigenous Games bid committee. She also sat on the 2010 aboriginal tourism working group.

**Sarbjit Bains**, of Surrey, has worked in real estate for 17 years and serves on the Surrey Parks and Recreation Commission, for which he has acted as liaison for the Surrey Arts Centre. He has served on the board of directors of Surrey Memorial Hospital and the steering committee for both the Surrey YMCA and the Surrey Museum. Bains was educated in India and is a member of the Surrey Chamber of Commerce.

**Debbie Demare**, a training specialist and manager at the continuing studies department of the University College of the Cariboo, is a Williams Lake city councilor. She has developed innovative, provincially recognized training programs including basic forest worker courses such as the assistant forest technician program, First Nations interpreter program, and transition programs to early childhood education for First Nations.

**Frank Everitt** is president of Local 1-424 Steelworkers, formerly the IAW, in Prince George. He has been active in the union movement since 1973 and has held various leadership positions, including trustee of the IWA Forest Industry Pension Plan for Western Canada. Everitt served on the Quesnel hospital board and on the labour council, and since moving to Price George has served on committees of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the Spruce Credit Union. He is a past board member of the College of New Caledonia.

**Enzo Guerriero**, Executive Director of the Britannia Community Centre in Vancouver, is involved in the Canucks Family Education Centre, which focuses on providing a comprehensive approach to family literacy and learning and identifying gaps in literacy program delivery. Guerriero is also a member of the Vancouver Foundation education advisory committee and is a former treasurer for the Burnaby Arts Council. He is a public sector representative on the board of directors for Fast Track to Employment.

**Carol Matuskicky**, of Vancouver, is Executive Director for the BC Council for Families, a non-profit, non-governmental organization that supports families by providing resources, education and training to strengthen family relationships. The council was presented with the 2003 Distinguished Service to Families Award by the National Council on Family Relations in recognition of exceptional leadership and service to improve family living. Matusicky is also past president of the Vanier Institute for the Family and the BC Coalition for Safer Communities.

**Peter Podovinikoff**, who chairs the board of the Kwantlen University College Foundation and serves on the board of the University College of the Fraser Valley Charitable Foundation, is past president of Envision Financial, BC's third largest credit union. Podovinikoff was instrumental in bringing together the Canadian Co-operative Credit Society and the National Association of Credit Unions. He previously served on the Economic Council of Canada and the Social Sciences ad Humanities Research Council of Canada.

**Kristen Rabnett** is Manager of Community Relations fro BC and the Northern Territories for the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce. Rabnett was instrumental in developing the Vancouver Giants' Read to Succeed program, and is on the board of directors for Dress for Success, which provides women moving into the workforce with appropriate attire. Before joining CIBC, Rabnett was a communications and special event consultant. She is a member of the Community Investment Network and is a member of the national advisory panel for the United Way.

**Dennis Skulsky** of the Pacific Newspaper Group, publishers of the Vancouver Sun and Province newspapers, is a strong supporter of literacy awareness and fundraising projects. He is active on boards and non-profit organizations throughout the Lower Mainland. Skulsky is a director for the Vancouver Public Library Foundation, Simon Fraser University's Segal graduate school of business, St. Paul's Hospital Foundation, the YMCA, the Business Council of British Columbia and the Vancouver Board of Trade. He is also senior executive of Global BCTV and CHBC in Kelowna.

**Chuck Van der Lee**, President and CEO of Rogers Video, graduated from the University of Alberta, and has worked for Rogers Video since 1990. Van der Lee is a member of the board for Amica Mature Lifestyles and Peace Arch Hospital and is membership chair of the Business Council of BC. Van der Lee has served as a member of the Special Olympics (BC), chair of the Retail Council of Canada's board of directors, and a member of the advisory board of Ryerson School of Retail Management.

**Dr. Peter Wong** is a medical doctor in general practice. A former instructor in family practice at Vancouver General Hospital, Wong received his medical degree from the University of BC in 1988. He is an honorary patron of the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Vancouver and founding member and director of the West Point Grey Academy and the West Point Grey Academy Foundation. Wong is also a director of the Dollar Food Group.

# APPENDIX B:
# Terms of Reference

The Premier's Advisory Panel on Literacy was established to assess urgent needs in literacy and develop recommendations for a Provincial Literacy Framework, focusing on the following two objectives:

1. **Define the problem**: assess the current situation and identify the nature and scope of the literacy challenges and issues in British Columbia, including a description of the groups and communities whose unmet needs are the greatest

2. **Develop an approach**: working in partnership with Literacy Now, Literacy BC and communities throughout the province, make recommendations to the Premier on a literacy strategy that builds capacity, forges intersections, and increases profile for the issue while indicating priorities for potential future investment in BC

The Panel's understanding of their role is to:

- act as a group of diverse citizens who are not professional experts on literacy and lifelong learning issues but can provide a "reason-based" analysis and approach

- focus on the strategic questions of "who", "why", "what" and "how" of literacy rather than on the operational issues "exactly how ", "how much", "when", and "where"

- build on the extensive and rich recommendations from numerous consultations and research studies over the past decade regarding literacy and lifelong learning issues in the province as well as nationally, and internationally

Since November 2004, the Panel has reviewed the numerous research and consultation studies of the past decade, surveyed participants from the Premier's Literacy Summit, listened to community perspectives arising out of the initial work of Literacy Now, and engaged in dialogue with diverse literacy and lifelong learning experts.

# APPENDIX C:
# Resource Materials

**Note**: Materials are listed according to their geographic scope: British Columbia, Canada-wide, and International. All references specifically cited in this report are preceded by an alpha-code; other materials that were reviewed but not specifically cited are listed in alphabetical order by title.

## British Columbia:


BCBC ***Raising the Bar: Advancing Workforce Literacy in BC***. Business Council of BC, November 2003

BCCC ***Closing the Skills Gap: A Report of the British Columbia Chamber of Commerce Skill Shortages Initiative.*** BC Chamber of Commerce, April 2002

BCPB ***Learning to Win: "Ready, Set, Go"***. Report of the Panel on Education, Skills, Training and Technology Transfer to the BC Progress Board, December 2002

BPUC ***The Big Picture Up Close: Literacy and Learning in BC.*** Huget, Stacey. Report prepared for Literacy BC, March 2002

CPSE ***Adult Basic skills Development: A Synthesis and Analysis of the Key policy Recommendations of the Faris, PLAC, Day, Rivers, and Cumming Reports***. Centre for Policy Studies in Education, University of British Columbia for the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development, March 1993

ESL ***English as a Second Language Services Review, Phase I: Current Practices and Critical Issues.*** English as a Second Language Services Review Advisory Group, Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services and Ministry of Advanced Education, February 2004

ESF ***Employability Skills Forum***. Heather Dickson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Employment, Government of BC, October 2002

FARIS ***Lifelong Learning for the 21st Century: A Report on the future development of adult/continuing education in British Columbia***. A report prepared by Dr. Ron Faris for the ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the Centre for Curriculum and Professional Development, 1992

LBC ***Making the Case ...*** Fact Sheet Series. Literacy BC, 2003

MHR ***Maximizing 2010-Related Employment & Skills Opportunities in British Columbia: Connecting Labour Market Supply & Demand***. Final Report of the 2010 Human Resources Planning Committee, 2010 Legacies Now, December 2003

NOW ***Literacy Now: A Planning Guide***, 2010 LegaciesNow, 2004

PLAC ***Opening the door to lifelong learning: empowering undereducated adults***. Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee (PLAC), Ministry of Advanced Education, Training, and Technology, 1989

POWER ***Perspectives on Work, Education and Responsibility: A Summary of the Dialogue and Outcomes of the POWER Symposium***. Prepared by Huget Consulting for the Group of 28 Lower Mainland Colleges, Universities, and School Districts (the G-28), February 2001

ROLES ***Advanced Education in BC: New Roles for New Times***. Paul Gallagher, October 2002

**Other Material Reviewed:**

***2010 Legacies NOW: Backgrounder***, www.2010legaciesnow.com

***Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Program of BC: Directory of Projects Funded 2004-2005***, National Literacy Secretariat of Human Resources Development Canada and Ministry of Advanced Education of the Province of British Columbia, www.aved.gov.bc.ca/literacy

***Lifelong Learning for All: The Purposes of Literacy in a Knowledge-Based Society***. Ron Faris, 2004

***Literacy Gaps and Opportunities in British Columbia***, A Report by Audrey M. Thomas for The Private Institutions Branch of the BC Ministry of Advanced Education, January 2004

***A New Model for Industry Training in British Columbia***. BC Ministry of Advanced Education, December 2002

***Spirit of BC Community Committees – Newsletter***, spiritofbc@2010legaciesnow.com

***Training for What?*** BC Labour Force Development Board, 1995

***Training for Whom: Research Background Paper***. BC Labour Force Development Board, December 1996

## Canada-Wide:

ABC/1 ***Who Wants to Learn: Patterns of Participation in Canadian Literacy and Upgrading Programs***. ABC CANADA, 2001

ABC/2 ***Why Aren't They Calling: Nonparticipation in Literacy and Upgrading Programs***. ABC CANADA, 2002

CB **Conference Board of Canada Website** (www.workplacebasicskills.com)

CBB ***The Economic Benefits of Improving Literacy in the Workplace***. Conference Board of Canada, 1997

CBT ***The High Costs of Illiteracy***. Canadian Business Task force on Literacy, 1987

CEA ***The Promise and Problem of Literacy for Canada: An Agenda for Action***. Canadian Education Association Policy Brief, 2004

CENSUS ***Education in Canada: Raising the Standard – 2001 Census: analysis series***. Ministry of Industry, 2003

COF ***Government Initiatives Promoting Literacy Best Practices.***, Council of the Federation, July 2004

CONN-ECTIONS ***Making the Connection***. Employability Skills Forum, October 2002

HRDC ***Canadians Speak on Innovation and Learning, Canada's Innovation Strategy***. Human Resources Development Canada, 2002

IALS94 ***Reading the Future: Portrait of Literacy in Canada***. International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), Statistics Canada, 1996.

LMO ***Literacy, Numeracy and Labour Market Outcomes in Canada***. Statistics Canada, 2001

MCL ***Strengthening Our Literacy Foundation is Key to Canada's Future***: ***Recommendations for the House of Commons Standing Committee on Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities***. Movement for Canadian Literacy, April 2003

MCL2 ***Literacy in Canada: It's Time for Action: Recommendations for the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance***. Movement for Canadian Literacy, November 2004

OECD/1 ***Early Childhood Education and Care Policy: Canada Country Note***. OECD Review Committee for Social Development Canada, October 2004

OECD/2 ***Literacy Scores, Human Capital and Growth Across Fourteen OECD Countries***. OECD and Statistics Canada, 2004

PAN/1 ***Raising Adult Literacy Skills: The Need for a Pan Canadian Response***, Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HRDSPD), June 2003

PAN/2 ***Government of Canada Response to "Raising Adult Literacy Skills: The Need for a Pan-Canadian Response"***. Human Resources Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities (HRDSPD),, June 2003

STEP ***Stepping Up: Skills and Opportunities in the Knowledge Economy. Report of the Expert Panel on Skills to the Advisory Council on Science and Technology***, September 2004

**Other Material Reviewed:**

***Consultations on the Government of Canada's Proposal to Establish a Canadian Learning Institute.*** Levin, Benjamin and Seward, Shirley, Canadian Labour and Business Centre, February 2003

***The Economic Benefits of Improving Literacy in the Workplace***. Conference Board of Canada, 1997

***Family Literacy in Canada: Considering the Policy Implications***. James Page, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, August 2004

***Literacy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Considering the Policy Implications***. James Page, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, October 2004

***Literacy and Disability in Canada: Considering the Policy Implications***. James Page, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, October 2004

***Moving the Markers: New Perspectives on Adult Literacy Rates in Canada.*** Susan B. Sussman, August 2003

***Seniors and Literacy in Canada: Considering the Policy Implications***. James Page, School of Canadian Studies, Carleton University, September 2004

***Variation in Literacy Skills Among Canadian Provinces: Findings from the OECD PISA***, by Douglas Willms, July 2004

## International:

UK ***Skills for Life: The Government's National Strategy for Improving Adult Literacy And Numeracy Skills – Focus on delivery to 2010***. U.K. Department for Education and Skills, September, 2004

# APPENDIX D:
# A Compelling Case for Literacy

Upon reviewing the extensive research and consultation around literacy and lifelong learning, the panel believes there are a number of compelling reasons for immediate intervention. These include:

- ✓ **It is a surprisingly widespread issue affecting all British Columbians.**
- ✓ **BC's economic performance depends on it.**
- ✓ **It influences labour market supply and demand.**
- ✓ **Employment and earnings are closely linked to literacy.**
- ✓ **It impacts our health and quality of life.**
- ✓ **It is an issue of criminal justice.**
- ✓ **Particular segments of society are dramatically affected.**
- ✓ **Some barriers to learning are hidden and require intervention.**
- ✓ **Our social and economic prosperity depends on it.**

## Surprisingly Widespread Issue

If you asked the "average guy on the street", he/she wouldn't likely think that significant numbers of British Columbians have problems with literacy development. They would probably be surprised to know how widespread the issue is.

- An estimated 8 million individuals 16 years of age and older lack the necessary literacy skills to participate fully in Canadian society. (IALS94)
- Approximately 42% of adults in British Columbia have low literacy skills (using the measure of prose literacy as a opposed to document or quantitative literacy): 19% of British Columbians are at the lowest level of literacy, and another 24% are at the second lowest level. Only 35% of British Columbians are at level 3 – the bare basics for fully functioning in today's society – and only 22% are at level 4 or 5. (IALS94)
- Relative to other "developed nations", Canada has nothing to boast about. While we ranked 5th in prose literacy among 20 countries surveyed, Canadians were 8th in document literacy, and 9th in quantitative literacy. (IALS94)

*While BC does have groups with special needs such as older workers and immigrants, literacy is not directly restricted to marginalized members of society. Significantly low literacy levels can be found in most communities throughout the province. (BCCC)*

- Literacy is not a fixed asset. It operates on the use-it-or-lose it principle. Like muscles, skills can deteriorate if not used. Those who read, write and use numbers regularly have higher literacy levels. (IALS94)

- Education strongly influences literacy but is not the only factor. Some less-educated people who practice their literacy skills regularly have higher literacy levels than well-educated people who do not practice their literacy skills. (IALS94)

***Without a greater understanding of how pervasive and consequential literacy issues are, the public may not rally around the Provincial government's "will to act".***

## Economic Performance Depends on it

Literacy is often thought of as being a social and/or philanthropic issue rather than an economic one. However, the evidence suggests otherwise:

- A recent Stats Canada study tracking 14 countries between 1960 and 1995 found that human capital developed through education and skills training is three times as important to economic growth as is investment in physical capital. (OECD/2)

- A recent US study found that on average a 10% increase in workforce training led to an 8.6% rise in total productivity; whereas a 10% increase in the value of equipment increased productivity by 3.4%. (CB)

- Even a small increase in national productivity through improved literacy will have a relatively large impact on public revenues. For example, a 2% increase in wages and earnings from improvements in national literacy would provide approximately a 1.8% increase in revenue in a country that is dependent primarily on value-added tax. (CBB)

- A recent Statistics Canada study demonstrated that a 1% increase in literacy skills among Canadians will drive $18.4 billion in annual, sustainable 1.5% GDP growth. (OECD/2)

- Benefits of workplace literacy programs include greater employee self-confidence, improved literacy skills, increased participation in other training, better problem solving skills, better team-building skills, increased ability to use technology, increased health and safety and improved labour-management relations. (CB)

*With the currently difficult economic and business climate, employers must seek new ways to remain competitive. This includes having a highly literate workforce ... Over the longer term and as the economy rebounds, the issue of a literate workforce will not go away. (BCBC)*

*Employers gain higher profits and a host of other bottom line benefits from improving employees' literacy and basic skills. More skillful employees save employers time and money, and improve performance and productivity ... These benefits translate into financial savings, productivity gains, and higher profits. (CB)*

- The impact of low literacy skills are significant in terms of industrial accidents and lost productivity, wages and profits. (CBT)

- The province's investments in education, training, and upgrading of specialized skills hold the highest pay-off of any investment that government, business, and individuals may make in improving the economic environment for business activity and employment growth. (BCPB)

*Canadian business ad labour organizations play an important role in motivating adults to increase their literacy levels. Workplace literacy programs that ensure workers meet health and safety standards, offer training in the use of more advanced methods and equipment, and provide financial support for the acquisition of literacy skills all help to promote literacy among adults. (CEA)*

***Literacy and lifelong learning are pivotal to British Columbia's future economic development, growth, and sustainability.***

## Labour Market Supply and Demand

Over the next two decades important sectors of the British Columbian economy will increasingly depend on a labour pool that is literate, knowledge-based and highly skilled:

***Skill Shortages:***

- Like many other countries, Canada has experienced a transformation from a reliance on natural resources to a knowledge-based economy. Traditional manufacturing and clerical jobs are being replaced by new jobs requiring higher technical skills. (IALS94)

- It is estimated that by 2004 more than 70% of all new jobs created in this country will require some form of post-secondary education. This trend does not bode well for low-skilled/low-literacy individuals in the labour market, as evidenced by the rate of unemployment among the least educated segments of the labour force. (LBC)

- According to some estimates, over 700,000 job openings are expected in the BC workforce over the 1998 to 2008 period; of these openings, fully 380,000 are expected to be a direct result of the baby-boom generation entering retirement. Sixty per cent of these opportunities will be in the "Technical, Paraprofessional and Skilled" and "Intermediate" occupational categories of the labour market, thereby requiring some level of post-secondary education. (BCPB)

*All Canadian employees face challenges to ongoing employment ... These challenges stem largely from technology and technological change, which is revolutionizing the workplace, making work more complex, and demanding higher skill levels, even in entry-level positions. (ESF)*

- Significant skill shortages are projected in a number of critical occupation groups such as: aircraft mechanics, computer programmers, electrical and computer engineers, nurses, physicians, pharmacists, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, educators. (BCPB)

*Global forces are restructuring whole economies, societies, industries, and communities. No province is immune from the powerful winds of change, especially a province such as British Columbia that is in a relatively rapid transition from an historically resource-based to an emerging knowledge-based economy and society. (Faris)*

***Available Labour Force:***

- British Columbia must not be complacent in the belief that shortfalls can be filled with workers from international or other domestic labour markets. Indeed, over the past five years, the inter-provincial flow of people out of BC has exceeded the flow of people into BC. (BCPB)

- More than half of the people who will be in the labour market in 2015 are already in it. Hence, many of today's workers will supply tomorrow's skill requirements. More than 40% of working-age Canadians lack the necessary basic literacy skills required for successful participation in our rapidly changing labour market. (LBC)

- The most disadvantaged labour force groups – women, persons with disabilities, immigrants and visible minorities, and Aboriginal people – represent 60% (10 million) of Canada's workforce. (BCCC)

- Canada's Aboriginal population is growing more quickly than the overall Canadian population. Between 1991 and 1996, the Canadian population grew on average by 1.6% every year. The Aboriginal population increased on average by 3.6% -- more than twice as rapidly. (MCL)

*Since half of the people who will make up the workforce in 2015 are already working and have completed their formal education, it will be imperative for everyone to practice lifelong learning as a way of adapting to constant workplace change and continuing to contribute to the labour force. (ESF)*

***Economic enterprise in BC cannot remain innovative, productive, and competitive in a global economy without an appropriately trained and adaptable labour force.***

## Employment and Earnings

Literacy is a key factor in determining unemployment and under-employment in BC – not only limiting the quality of life for British Columbians, but also compromising the productivity and competitiveness of our economy.

- Canadians with the lowest literacy skills have higher rates of unemployment (26%) and those with the highest skills have lower rates of unemployment (4%). (IALS94)

- Literacy is linked to economic success. Literacy levels determine the kind of jobs people find, the salaries they make and their ability to upgrade their work skills. (IALS94)

*Employees with higher literacy skills earn more income, are less likely to be unemployed, have greater opportunities for job mobility, are more likely to find full-time work and are more likely to receive further training. (IALS94)*

- Each additional year of education a person receives is worth 8.3% of their pay cheque. Using an annual base salary of $30,000, this amounts to an additional $2,490 per year. (LMO)

- People with literacy problems have only 2/3rds the income of other adults. Inequalities in literacy contribute to inequalities in income, occupational status, and access to certain labour markets. Individuals with level 1 (the lowest) literacy skills make $28,000 less than those with level 4/5 (highest) literacy level. (LBC)

- It is estimated that over an employee's lifetime, a male worker with a high document literacy level can expect to earn $1,743,000 in pre-tax earnings, or $585,000 more than a male worker with a low document literacy level. A female worker with high document literacy can expect to earn $1,242,000 in her lifetime, or $559,000 above that estimated for women with a low document literacy level. (HRDC)

- It is estimated that roughly 540,000 individuals in the Canadian labour market forego an average of some $8,000 to $12,000 each year because some portion of their formally and informally acquired human capital is not recognized ... The problem is particularly serious in terms of unrecognized foreign credentials ... (PAN/1)

*The upgrading of basic skills and literacy will better assure individuals of an improved quality of life. This is increasingly important as technology continually raises the literacy threshold. For example, Grade 12 completion is no longer a proxy for literacy, entry into employment, or post-secondary education. (BCCC)*

***We will not effectively address issues of unemployment and under-employment without considering the literacy skills of our workforce.***

## Impacts Health and Quality of Life

Literacy development and lifelong learning are essential factors in British Columbians' health and quality of life:

- Research in this regard is unequivocal. The higher a nation's literacy skills, the more likely its population is to have healthier habits and lifestyles. (IALS94)

- People with low literacy have poorer health overall. Low literacy leads to preventable uses of health services. People with low literacy skills often wait longer to seek medical help so health problems reach a crisis state. (LBC)

*People with lower literacy skills (including people from cultural minorities) may have trouble reading and understanding health information unless it is clearly presented and appears relevant. (LBC)*

- Low literacy has a negative effect on all aspects of health, including overall levels of life expectancy, accidents and diseases such as diabetes cardiovascular disease and cancer. People with lower literacy skills are more likely to suffer the consequences of working and living in unsafe or dangerous environments. (LBC)

*People with low literacy may not have the background health knowledge and vocabulary to understand instructions and information given verbally or in writing. People with low literacy may not know about the services available to them. They can feel powerless and intimidated in relation to health professionals and institutions. (LBC)*

***Particularly for Seniors:***

- Less literate seniors have more difficulty maintaining their own health, safety, independence and self-esteem and are less able to care for others. (LBC)

- Seniors and other Canadians with low levels of literacy may miss out on information about new treatments, drug side effects or lifestyle changes that could enhance their health at the very time when their health needs are greatest. (LBC)

***We cannot maximize our health and quality of life in BC without considering levels of literacy and the strength of our lifelong learning culture.***

## Criminal Justice

Literacy is a factor in the incidence of criminal behavior – and one of its most powerful remedies.

- As much as 75% of Canadian inmates have low literacy skills. 36% offenders have not completed grade nine. (LBC)

- According to the Correctional Service of Canada, the average education level of newly admitted offenders serving two years or more is Grade seven. (LBC)

- Studies show that prisoners who participate in prison-based education are less likely to re-offend. Prison literacy and education programs help to provide inmates with a second chance. Every dollar allocated to vocational and basic education programs for offenders yields a 200-300% return on investment. (MCL)

- According to the American-based Rand Corporation, $1 million invested in prison space for career criminals prevents 60 crimes a year. The same million invested in incentives to graduate from high school, would prevent 258 crimes a year. (MCL2)

*Accused persons, witnesses and victims with low literacy skills may not have equal access to justice. The text and process surrounding the legal system from arrest to sentencing can be complex and alienating to anyone and especially to those who have low literacy skills. (LBC)*

***Our notions of criminal justice and reform are incomplete if they do not contemplate intervention relating to literacy and lifelong learning.***

## Segments of Society Dramatically Affected

While the state of literacy development among the general population is poorer than most people would imagine, it is particularly alarming for specific groups within society.

***Seniors:***

- Seniors, 65 and older, comprise a large percentage of Canadian adults who score in the lowest two reading levels. 37% have less than a Grade 9 education (compared to 4% of the general population). 60% never completed high school. Only 8% have a university degree. (Unsourced)

***Aboriginals:***

- IALS ranked the literacy skills of almost half of Canadian adults as below the acceptable range – yet it did not include our Aboriginal population and the reality is that Canada's Aboriginal peoples have even lower literacy rates. One indicator of this is the proportion of Registered Indians with less that Grade 9 education; in 1996, it was approximately double that of other Canadians. (MCL/2)

***Immigrants:***

- Some 59% of foreign-born individuals in Canada 16 years of age and over had low prose literacy skills, compared to 45% of similarly aged domestic-born individuals. (IALS94)

***People with Disabilities:***

- Levels of education, literacy skills and employment are lower among persons with disabilities than the rest of the Canadian population. 77% of people with learning disabilities and 48% of those with physical disabilities had document literacy scores below Level 3, compared to 36% of those with no disability. (IALS94)

***People in Poverty:***

- People from poor families as well as the long-term unemployed, seniors, native people, prisoners, people with disabilities, and racial and cultural minorities all have lower rates of literacy and higher rates of poverty. They have fewer choices in jobs, education, housing and other things we need to have full lives. Poverty and low literacy form a cycle that is difficult to break. (LBC)

*How can our future workforce meet the challenges of an emerging knowledge-based economy unless every citizen – including those who too often have been in the shadows of our society: the disabled, First Nations people, visible minorities, marginalized youth and many women – are assured of the literacy skill that will enable their participation? (Faris)*

*Schools and communities are not yet achieving an acceptable level of success in effectively meeting the needs of Aboriginal students. (BCPB)*

*Canada's multilingual population is a great social and economic resource but until the right mechanisms are put in place to ensure that linguistic minorities can attain adequate literacy levels to be full participants in society, the under-utilization of this valuable resource blunts the positive impact of immigration policies.(CEA)*

- According to a 2003 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada by Campaign 2000, even in the year 2001 almost one in six children in Canada still lived in poverty. These children are often not well served by the school system where they are likely to be labeled and placed in classes where less is expected of them and less may be offered. Their parents may not have the information, confidence, or skills to challenge the school system for help. Many poor children either drop out of high school or graduate without being fully literate. (LBC)

*We must work together to address issues of economic and social inequity, to ensure that Canada's Aboriginal peoples have the resources they need to thrive as communities, and as full participants and contributors to Canada's future economic and social prosperity. Investment in Aboriginal literacy development is a crucial step toward this goal. (MCL)*

***Everyone is affected by neglecting to act on behalf of those who are most disadvantaged; it lowers our overall standard of living and quality of life.***

## Hidden Barriers to Learning

Literacy and lifelong learning are central to building people's capacity to live, work, learn, play, and participate well. However, access to learning opportunities are not equally available to or appropriate for all people.

- Only a small fraction (est. 5-10%) of eligible adults has ever enrolled in a literacy or upgrading program and among those who do enroll, drop out rates are high. The main barriers cited are lack of support for child care, transportation, and attendant care for disabled persons, long working hours, family needs, poor health, discouragement and lack of confidence – not to mention programs that just don't fit their needs. (LBC)

*The fact that there are a great many people who need help with literacy is not in doubt. The question to be answered is how best to reach and motivate them. (ABC/2)*

- Literacy funding tends to target those whose goal is employment. As a result literacy programs are neither funded nor geared to adequately address the goals, values, interests and sensory needs of older adults. (LBC)

*According to several commentators, the quality debate in Canada has been a restricted one. To simplify: in the education sector, the debate has tended to focus on readiness-for-school goals. In the child care sector, quality has been undermined by the struggle to survive on inadequate subsidies. The structural underpinnings of quality have been neglected; in particular, sufficient funding and adequate profiling and training of staff. (OECD/1)*

- Whether born in Canada or other countries, today's seniors grew up in a very different world. For many, their schooling was cut short by poverty, war, the Depression, family obligations, lack of access to schools or the lure of many good jobs that did not require high literacy or numeracy skills. (LBC)

- Research on second language acquisition indicates that under the most favourable conditions people take almost 2 years to attain communicative, conversational fluency in a second language and up to 7 years to achieve full proficiency. (CPSE)

- Research also indicates that some immigrants, in particular women, consider themselves able to pursue language studies after they have established a secure home life and economic position – which may be 3-10 years after initial immigration. (CPSE)

*The most shocking statistic may no longer be how many Canadians have low literacy skills, but rather how few are being helped by the country's current service delivery mechanisms (ABC/1)*

***The notion of supporting individual initiative can only be realized to the extent that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed.***

## Social and Economic Prosperity

People with low literacy are particularly at risk for experiencing social issues relating to health, safety, crime, addiction, abuse, and isolation.

***Social Costs:***

- The impact of low literacy skills is significant in terms of social assistance and incarceration; health cost increases; corrections improvements – including lower rates of re-admission. (CBT)

- The National Center for Family Literacy's long-term research with 2,000 families that attended family literacy programs shows that literacy intervention reduced participants' full dependence on public assistance from 67% to 11%. (Un-sourced))

- Researchers estimate that over the lifetime of participants in an early literacy intervention program, returns to the public are $7.16 for every dollar invested (Un-sourced)

*The twin goals of economic development and social inclusion cannot be achieved without a fully literate society, nor can democratic processes and institutions flourish without a people skilled in sustaining robust democratic government and vibrant voluntary sectors. (Faris)*

***Health Care Costs:***

- According to one study conducted by the American Medical Association, patients with the lowest literacy levels had average annual health care costs of $12,974 compared with $2,969 (USD) for the overall population studied. (MCL/2)

- MCL2 – In another study, recorded by the Council on Scientific Affairs, of the 958 low-income patients the study followed over 2 years, patients with weak literacy were nearly twice as likely to have been hospitalized during the previous year (31.5% bs. 14.9%), a relationship that persisted after adjustment for health status and various socio-economic indicators. (MCL/2)

*Research shows that improved literacy pays off not only in labour market productivity, but also in better outcomes for children; Aboriginal development; better integration of newcomers; lower healthcare costs; safe and more cohesive communities; more successful rehabilitation of offenders; greater civic participation; and more. Improving literacy not only improves outcomes for individuals, families and communities; it alleviates the economic strain that many social problems pose on our society as a whole. (MCL)*

***Innovation and Adaptability:***

- We live in a time of fast-paced change, where local communities, not-for-profit organizations, businesses, and public institutions are often undergoing major transformations. Strong literacy capacities and commitments to lifelong learning are key to helping people survive and work through these changes effectively. (LBC)

***Citizen Engagement:***

- Those with higher literacy skills tend to be more involved citizens who participate in their communities and in society. (IALS 94)

*to participate fully in civic life, citizens must have the skills necessary to access and to act upon information. Whether casting a ballot in an election, participating in a community forum, accessing programs and services, defending their civic or human rights, or advocating for needed change, an effective democracy requires its citizens to be informed and engaged. Unfortunately, poor literacy skills effectively bar a large percentage of our population, both Canadian-born and newcomers, from participating in civic life. MCL)*

*Taken overall, threads of a lifelong learning approach in Canada are emerging, and if woven together with coherent community partnerships of the public, private and voluntary sectors, could be the basis of a rich and diverse tapestry that could be world-class. (Faris)*

*High literacy levels contribute to a civil society. People with high literacy skills are more likely to become community volunteers, sponsor or coach community recreation groups, work on community projects, and vote. (CEA)*

***The costs of these consequences are high – for the individuals involved, for the communities affected, and for the taxpayers who fund government programs to achieve redress.***

# APPENDIX E:
# Literacy and Life Stages

| | Children – Birth to Grade 3 | Youth – Grades 4 to 12 | Adults – Both Marginalized and Mainstream |
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| **Who's Included** | ▪ All children<br><br>▪ Children who are potentially at higher risk, including:<br>- aboriginals<br>- children of new immigrants and/or refugees<br>- those with special needs, including learning disabilities<br>- those who live in inner city neighbourhoods<br>- children from distressed families<br>- those whose families live at or below the poverty line | ▪ All young people<br><br>▪ Young people who have dropped out of school for diverse reasons such as: safety, failure, lack of relevancy and meaning, and lack of key adult relationships, etc.<br><br>▪ Young people who are potentially at higher risk, including those who:<br>- are boys<br>- are Aboriginal<br>- from families of new immigrants and/or refugees<br>- have special needs<br>- have learning disabilities<br>- are from inner city neighbourhoods<br>- live in distressed families<br>- are poor<br>- live on the streets | ▪ All adults<br><br>▪ Adults with some literacy skills and capacities and often formal education up to Grade 12, who are potentially at risk:<br>- adaptation required by changing communities, workplaces, and society as a whole<br>- of an age or live a particular lifestyle where they are more likely to lose their literacy and lifelong learning skills<br><br>▪ Young adults who have not completed Grade 12<br><br>▪ Adults with low literacy skills and few capacities to pursue lifelong learning<br><br>▪ Adults with low literacy skills, who face other personal challenges, including:<br>- mental illness<br>- substance abuse |

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| | | | - developmental and physical disabilities<br>- low levels of formal education<br>- reliance on social assistance<br>- poverty<br>- homelessness<br>- being Aboriginal<br>- from families of new immigrants or refugees |
| **Particular Stakeholders** | ▪ Parents, grandparents, and foster parents – as the primary caregivers for children<br><br>▪ Elementary schools, principals, teachers, and related school district staff<br><br>▪ Ministry of Education<br><br>▪ For some families, preschools and child care services, family resource and family literacy programs<br><br>▪ The Provincial ministries concerned more with children and families at risk: Ministry of Child and Family Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Human Resources, and Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services | ▪ Young people themselves<br><br>▪ Parents<br><br>▪ Peers<br><br>▪ Elementary schools and high schools, principals, and related school district staff<br><br>▪ Ministry of Education<br><br>▪ Ministry of Advanced Education and post secondary institutions<br><br>▪ Ministry of Economic Development, employers, and unions<br><br>▪ For some young people, various community programs related to sports, the arts, recreation, and adult relationships | ▪ Adult learners<br><br>▪ Aboriginals, in particular<br><br>▪ Immigrants, in particular<br><br>▪ People with disabilities, in particular<br><br>▪ People living in poverty, in particular<br><br>▪ Provincial government Ministries, including:<br>- Education<br>- AVED<br>- MCFD<br>- MCAWS<br>- MHR<br>- Health<br>- Attorney General<br><br>▪ Colleges and school districts |

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| | | ▪ The Provincial ministries concerned more with young people and families at risk: Ministry of Child and Family Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Human Resources, and Ministry of Community, Aboriginal, and Women's Services | ▪ Community/volunteer-based delivery/supports<br>▪ Employers and coworkers<br>▪ Community development advocates<br>▪ Federal government Ministries, including HRDC |
| **Why it Matters** | ▪ This is a foundational time of learning, and of physical, social, emotional, and mental development, that leads directly to the capacities to be successful in school, and hence to the later capacities to be fully engaged as an adult<br>▪ Children who start school "behind" are less likely to succeed in school, and more likely to later engage in costly at risk behaviours. The same applies to those children who complete grade 3, but who do not have the grade 3 literacy skills of reading, writing, and mathematics<br>▪ These children will be adults in two decade. They are the future labour force for British Columbia. We cannot afford to not develop these children to their full potential | ▪ Young people in this age group are at the crossroads in their development to effective functioning adults, learning, working, playing, relating, and engaging as citizens<br>▪ There is solid research indicating the key learning and developmental milestones, and the key learning barriers<br>▪ Young people who fail in school are more likely to engage in at risk behaviours and crime – with significant costs to families, communities, and the public<br>▪ These young people will be adults in a decade. They are the immediate future labour force for British Columbia. We cannot afford to not develop these young people to their full potential | ▪ Reduced crime and safer communities, workplaces, and families<br>▪ Reduced at risk behaviours, and reduced tax expenditures on at risk behaviours<br>▪ Pride and, therefore, morale and cohesion, for: individuals, families, workplaces, and communities<br>▪ Increased employability, reduced poverty, and reduced numbers of people on social assistance<br>▪ Increased productivity, innovation, and adaptability in businesses, other organizations, and economic sectors |

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| | | | ▪ Reduced critical labour skill shortages<br>▪ Higher tax revenues<br>▪ More parents confident and involved in supporting their children's learning and literacy development<br>▪ Increased quality of life for individuals and families, and opportunities to develop and learn<br>▪ More engaged citizens<br>▪ Increased involvement in diverse activities: arts and culture, recreation, .....<br>▪ Stronger cultural identities, as a result of mother tongue language and literacy development |
| **Desirable and Measurable Outcomes** | ***Greater Parental Involvement:***<br>▪ Increased parental involvement in supporting the literacy development and learning of their children<br>- as indicated by ???<br>- by when? | ***Fewer Drop Outs:***<br>▪ Increased # or % of young people completing Grade 12<br>- by when?<br>- by how much? (to 85% from 78%?) | ***Literacy Rankings:***<br>▪ Increased adult literacy levels<br>- as measured by IALS?<br>- by when? |

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| | ***Improved School Readiness:***<br>▪ Increased overall readiness of children as they enter kindergarten<br>- such that scores on pre-school assessments increase by XX% in XX years???<br>- What about EDI?<br><br>***More Even Playing Field:***<br>▪ Reduced inequities in the readiness of children as they enter kindergarten<br>- such that the maximum deviation from average pre-school assessments does not exceed XX???<br>- by when?<br><br>***Acceptable Proficiency Levels:***<br>▪ All children completing grade 3 with the grade 3 appropriate literacy skills of reading, writing, and mathematics<br>- such that assessments indicate 100% of children have achieved this level of proficiency???<br>- by when?<br>- | ▪ Reduced school drop out rates in Grades 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12<br>- by when?<br>- by how much? (10%?)<br><br>▪ Increased high school graduation rates in under-performing schools in particular<br>- by when?<br>- by how much? (10%?)<br><br>▪ Increased high school graduation rates among aboriginals in particular<br>- by when?<br>- by how much? (10%?)<br><br>▪ Increased high school graduation rates among immigrants in particular<br>- by when?<br>- by how much? (10%?)<br><br>***Increased Ranking:***<br>▪ Achieve rankings for British Columbia as first among the provinces and among the top 3 locations internationally<br>- by when?<br>- Provincial performance measured by standardized assessments at Grades 4, 7, and 10?<br>- International performance measured by IALS? | ▪ Reduced inequities in adult literacy levels<br>- as measured by IALS?<br>- by when?<br><br>▪ Reduced number and proportion of British Columbians at the lowest literacy levels<br>- as measured by IALS?<br>- Move ??% of level 1/2s to level 3<br>- by when?<br>- Redundant with previous?<br><br>▪ Decreased numbers of adults who lose their literacy skills over time because of non-use<br>- as measured by % downward trend in IALS<br><br>***Improved Access to Programs:***<br>▪ Increased opportunities for adults to be life long learners: in communities, public institutions, and workplaces<br>- how to measure?<br>- by when?<br><br>***Improved Program Take-Up:***<br>▪ Increased workplace basic skills and/or essential skills training<br>- % spending in training budgets on basic skills upgrading |

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| | | ***Labour Force Readiness:***<br>▪ Increased work-readiness among Grade 12 graduates<br>- the percentage of employers who report satisfaction with the essential workforce skills of recent graduates<br>- use ?? as the measurement tool?<br>- should increase to XX% (from XX%?)<br>- by when?<br>-<br><br>***Personal Satisfaction:***<br>▪ Increased satisfaction of Grade 12 graduates with their high school experience – be it in terms of preparing them for a changing world, society, and economy, or preparing them for additional training<br>- measured by exit interview process?<br>- What percentage increase?<br>- Reliable measure?<br>- By when? | - % basic skills or essential skills content in workplace curriculum<br>- employer take up of incentives offered<br>- by when?<br>-<br><br>▪ Increased numbers of adults returning to acquire credentials from school districts, colleges, correspondence<br>- % enrollment<br>- % adult dogwoods awarded<br>- % GED certificates<br>- by when?<br><br>***Program Effectiveness:***<br>▪ Increased readiness outcomes for literacy programs<br>- % of people who find a job<br>- % of people go on to further learning<br>- average individuals' incomes up ??%<br>- self-reported increases in confidence, family relations, community involvement, etc.? |

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| - | | | ***Enhanced Awareness:***<br>▪ Increased overall public awareness about the importance of literacy and lifelong learning<br>- as measured by?<br>- by when?<br><br>▪ Reduced gap between the actual skills of people in the workplace and their perceived needs<br>- as measured by what?<br>- by when? |
| **Possible Strategic Interventions** | ***Parents And Families:***<br>▪ Increase the awareness and confidence of all parents in their roles in supporting the literacy development and learning of their children<br><br>▪ Engage employers in creating opportunities for parents to support the literacy development and learning of their children<br><br>▪ Place attention on preschools and child care services as key resources for the literacy development and learning of children, including increasing the professional competency of staff to teach literacy skills | ***Young People:***<br>▪ Initiate a social marketing program to change the attitudes and behaviours of young people regarding literacy development and lifelong learning<br><br>▪ Engage young people in community involvement through partnerships with community organizations and institutions<br><br>***Parents And Families:***<br>▪ Strength the partnerships between parents and schools<br><br>***Schools:***<br>▪ Create bridges between high schools and post secondary institutions and employers | **See Appendix F...** |

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| | ***Schools:***<br>▪ Strengthen the partnerships between parents and elementary schools, starting before children enter kindergarten<br><br>▪ Fully implement the research regarding learning barriers and best practices in supporting the literacy development and learning of children<br><br>▪ Develop opportunities for children to learn year round<br><br>▪ Increase the professional competencies among teachers to teach literacy skills<br><br>***Parents And Families At Risk:***<br>▪ Focus on meeting the basic needs of families for incomes, food, shelter, clothing and transportation<br><br>▪ Increase outreach efforts to those parents who are challenged in supporting the literacy development and learning of their children<br><br>▪ Support the development of home visiting services that focus on the social, emotional, physical, and learning needs and interests of children | ▪ Fully implement the research regarding learning barriers and best practices in supporting the literacy development and learning of young people<br><br>▪ Ensure that all teachers have the professional knowledge and skills to teach basic literacy skills and the essential skills required for functioning adulthood<br><br>▪ Require high schools to teach both skills (for example: basic literacy skills and workplace essential skills) as well as curriculum content<br><br>▪ Expect high schools to ensure that all young people graduating with grade 12 do so with the appropriate grade 12 literacy skills<br><br>***Screening:***<br>▪ Use standardized assessments (for example: those at grades 4, 7, and 10) to identify young people at risk, and implement appropriate interventions | |

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| | ▪ Link opportunities for children to develop their literacy capacities and learn to ESL programs<br><br>***Provincial Government:***<br>▪ Recognize that, while parents play a leading role in supporting the literacy development and learning of their children, public interventions are required, particularly for families at risk<br><br>▪ Ensure that support and learning programs for children and families are consistently and adequately funded<br><br>***Screening:***<br>▪ Carry out screening related to health, learning, and social development at appropriate age levels, and ensure access to the related intervention resources<br><br>▪ Use the results of screening processes to identify and act upon key gaps in resources and services<br><br>***Communities:***<br>▪ Build and maintain community infrastructures in support of children and families that are stable and integrated | | |

# APPENDIX F:
# A Decade of Policy and Practice Recommendations

| | Intent (i.e. principle, policy, strategic, tactical) ** | Outcome Specified |
|---|---|---|
| **A. Position Literacy as an Issue for All of Us...** | | |
| • (Undertake) social marketing to increase the reading behavior of adults and increase appreciation for the value of literacy. (CEA) | *Strategic* | |
| • Use "literacy and lifelong learning" as the over-arching, umbrella phrase that describes all learning and skills acquisition. (BPUC) | *Strategic* | |
| **B. Link Literacy to Lifelong Learning...** | | |
| • (Adopt) the concept of lifelong learning as an organizing principle and social goal for education and training programs of all government ministries and agencies, the total public educational system, and the promotion of learning opportunities in the non-formal sector – and incorporate this view in a provincial policy statement. (FARIS) | *Policy* | |
| • A continuous learning system should engage every British Columbian, from their time of birth through senior citizenship, in fulfilling the promise of their natural capacity for learning, growing, and innovating. Within this system there should be a continuum of learning opportunities with three main areas of concentration...Our goal now is to link our systems and integrate the work of our respective institutions into a refined, expanded continuous learning system that effectively engages and prepares every citizen of the province for a productive and prosperous future. (BCPB) | *Policy* | |
| **C. Take a Collaborative Approach...** | | |
| ***Promote Networking:*** | | |
| • Create stronger linkages between different providers and strategies so as to share information, collaborate on strategy, and share a common voice on issues of broader policy, including (BPUC): | *Strategic* | |

- create stronger information networks and linkages among all providers
- build bridges between "family literacy", "adult literacy", and "workforce literacy" so that all have a - well-understood and seamless role in the overall pursuit of literacy and lifelong learning
- expand the role of Regional Literacy Coordinators to serve as the glue between all of the multiple programming strategies being implemented in their region – and fund them accordingly

*Tactical*

- Promote and support the development and evolution of learning networks to build capacity using network technologies. (PAN/1)

*Tactical*

***Aboriginal:***

- Establish policy and procedures for the delivery of Native literacy programs dependent on the maximum involvement of Native educators and leaders in the design and implementation of a province-wide strategy. (PLAC)

*Policy*

- Develop programming strategies for First Nations communities, "at risk" teens, and those in the workforce. (BPUC)

*Strategy*

## D. Build on Strengths and Existing Capacity...

***Support Diverse Programming:***

- Acknowledge the value and variety of forms that programming strategies do and should take ... Acknowledge contribution of non-traditional learning models: support any strategies which foster greater energy and garner greater resources for creative, inclusive, and holistic learning models – whether delivered as part of or alongside the traditional education system. (BPUC)

*Policy*

***Community-Based Approaches – in General:***

- Acknowledge and respect the diversity of communities throughout BC; support the right of individual communities to learn and draw from what happens provincially and elsewhere – but to self-determine how best it is applied at the local level. (Unsourced)

*Policy*

- Encourage the community – parents, big industry, unions, students, small business, adult learners – to engage in the debate about what we want from our education and training and participate in the search for solutions to our challenges. (POWER)

*Strategic*

- Business, labour, community organizations, libraries, Native organizations, colleges, and schools should have partnership roles to play in every community. (PLAC)

*Principle*

- Catalyze community programs through a community outreach worker. (Unsourced)

*Tactical*

- Fully support strategies which foster "learning communities" to develop throughout BC and enable communities to more easily share information with one another about those strategies (eg. community mapping, developing indicators of community vibrancy) and about their successes. (BPUC) — *Strategic*

- Make community colleges be the community catalysts with community advisory committees to improve levels of adult literacy. (PLAC) — *Tactical*

- Make literacy a priority at the regional college level so as to foster community-based program delivery. (Unsourced) — *Tactical*

- Opportunities for basic learning for adults should be funded by government but provided as community-based activities, utilizing available community resources including those of colleges, university colleges, and school districts. (ROLES) — *Tactical*

***Community Learning Centres:***

- Pilot community learning councils in several communities. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

- Develop guidelines for establishing community learning councils for determining their membership and their level of financial support. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

- The (appropriate ministries) ensure statutory provision for the formation and operation of community learning councils. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

- All ministry divisions and agencies collaborate in development of multi-agency, multi-purpose community learning centres. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

## E. Overcome the "Knowing-Doing" Gap...

***Research***:

- Support an adult literacy research and evaluation capability in the province and establish necessary procedures for evaluating the success of literacy initiatives. (PLAC) — *Strategic*

- Support research into and dissemination of information on literacy – its level, distribution, determinants and outcomes. (CEA) — *Tactical*

***Promote Best Practices:***

- Develop and share best practices in connection with family and community-based literacy activities. (HRDC) — *Strategic*

- Establish an innovative adult/continuing education project proposal system to encourage development of high quality practice and materials. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

- Work with the literacy field to identify and advocate for best practice protocols re: referral, intake, follow-up, program evaluation and integrated service delivery. (ABC/1) — *Tactical*

- (Facilitate) consensus among literacy practitioners across the country as to what criteria should be applied to best practices (COF): — *Tactical*
  - *Accessibility* – location easy to reach and enter, safe, appropriate scheduling
  - *Affordability* – tuition-free, financial assistance, book supply or depository
  - *Accountability* – to all involved in program, results relate to program objectives
  - *Adaptability* – flexibility in changing needs and conditions, innovator
  - *Appropriateness* – of instructional ratios, approaches and materials for learners
  - *Awareness* – of learners' needs, of referral and community services, promotions
  - *Bridging Arrangements* – knowledge of other programs and sensitive referrals
  - *Community Context* – different cultures situated within locale, community relations
  - *Participation* – involve learners in other program activities and volunteers and staff
  - *Partnerships* – collaboration with other community and business partners etc.
  - *Replicability* – awareness of any adaptations that may be required; start small
  - *Resources* – physical, financial, instructional and him are all adequate for need
  - *Respect* – for individuals, diverse cultures, language, race and religion, etc.
  - *Staff Training* – appropriate training/experience for the job for paid staff and volunteers

## F. Support Individual Initiative...

*Government Services:*

- Encourage awareness and sensitivity towards less literate people (within government). Departments serving the public should consider the literacy levels of their client population. Ensure that staff is aware of different learning styles and learning disabilities. (Unsourced) — *Strategic*

- Do focus tests of government materials with real people who have low literacy skills. Monitor how well government is communicating. (Unsourced) — *Tactical*

- Encourage and support plain English efforts throughout the BC government in all those ministries and departments that deal with the general public, including those with the least education. (PLAC) — *Tactical*

- Use clear language consistently in written and verbal communications. Provide workshops to teach staff clear language communication techniques. (Unsourced) — *Tactical*

*Library Access:*

- Provide community-wide access to the World Wide Web and digital resources in all Canadian communities. (CEA) — *Strategic*

- Increase support for libraries and electronic access to reading materials in official languages in minority contexts and for non-official language speakers. (CEA) — *Tactical*

- Promote and support more literacy initiatives with public libraries. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

## 1. Ramp Up Leadership...

**NOTE**: Interestingly, none of the policy and practice recommendations specifically flag leadership in the sense the Panel is advocating (i.e. that the Premier putting his name behind the "literacy pillar", being involved in the "vetting" of an overall policy framework, following through on deliverables and accountabilities, etc.) — *Strategic*

## 2. Construct an Overall Provincial Literacy Framework/Plan ...

*National Framework:*

- Establish a pan-Canadian literacy development system ... involving all levels of government, businesses, labour, education, and training providers, as well as literacy groups and non-governmental organizations. (HRDC) — *Strategic*

*Aboriginals*:

- Support (with funding from the federal government) a forum where representatives from First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities, as well as relevant Ministers from provincial and territorial governments, and the federal Ministers responsible for HRDC and Indian and Northern Affairs can come together to develop a multi-government Aboriginal Literacy Action Plan. This Aboriginal Literacy Action Plan should build on knowledge and best practices that respect Aboriginal cultures and languages, with the goal of creating healthy, literate communities, integrated programming, meaningful educational experiences, and programs and policies to address learning and educational gaps. (MCL) — *Strategic*

*Within BC:*

- (Develop) a provincial policy framework and implement a provincial lifelong learning strategy. (FARIS) — *Policy*

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| • Ensure that teachers are well equipped to deliver essential skills education. (STEP) | *Tactical* | |

### 3. Require Outcomes-Based Accountability...

***Overall Framework***:

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| • Develop a national approach to credentials recognition, and national programs for putting skills into curricula. (HRDC) | *Strategic* | |
| • (Develop a) key emphases that the provincial learning system for those in grades 11 and 12 should broaden criteria for graduation. (BCPB) | *Tactical* | |

***The Role of Assessments:***

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| • Clarify the use of measures. (Unsourced) | *Tactical* | |
| • Develop a core emphasis on student performance assessment in kindergarten through grade 10, with a focus on expanded and refined knowledge of student assessment criteria and methodology; set targets for performance on international achievement tests (reading, math and science) approaching a score of 550. (BCPB) | *Strategic* | ✓ |
| • (Develop a) key emphases that the provincial learning system for K-10 should concentrate on performance assessment with an emphasis on reading, numeracy, science, fine arts, and social responsibility. (BCPB) | *Strategic* | |
| • Monitor the acquisition of essential skills by elementary, secondary and post-secondary students. (STEP) | *Strategic* | |

***Academic and Non-Academic Learning Outcomes:***

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| • Lessen the importance of grade scores and place more emphasis on how to think critically, problem-solve, and relate to one another ... Focus less on the credential and more on the value of what is being learned. (POWER) | *Strategic* | |
| • Move to a learning-outcomes based model that recognizes both academic and non-academic outcomes. (BPUC) | *Strategic* | |
| • Implement a consistent annual reporting system for continuing education activities to enable and encourage the sharing of information throughout the province (CPSE - Day) | *Tactical* | |

***Institutional Accountability:***

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| • (Make) institutions charged with continuing education tasks be accountable for their activities and use of direct and indirect resources (CPSE - Day) | *Policy* | |

***Ministries of Education and Advanced Education:***

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| ▪ Broaden and extend pathways to graduation and target an increase in the overall secondary program graduation rate at a minimum of 85% by 2010, and increase the rate of secondary program graduation for Aboriginal students to 60% or better by 2010. (BCPB) | *Strategic* | ✓ |
| ▪ Within the increase of the overall secondary program graduation rate, target increases in the number of students completing programs in apprenticeship, career/technical, and cooperative education by a minimum of 50% by 2010. (BCPB) | *Tactical* | ✓ |
| ▪ Strive to achieve a school completion rate of 85% by 2010. (BCPB) | *Strategic* | ✓ |
| ▪ Appropriate targets for improved performance should be set to achieve equity between urban, regional and rural districts by 2010. (BCPB) | *Tactical* | |

***Aboriginals:***

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| ▪ The (2010 Human Resources Planning) Committee encourages Aboriginal groups and education stakeholders to consider a strategic alliance between coordinators of Aboriginal back-to-school initiatives. The purpose of this alliance could be to: compare and consolidate data to get the most accurate and current rates for high school completion and dropouts for Aboriginal youth, capturing improvements over the past year (and critical contributing factors to success). (MIIR) | *Tactical* | |

## 4. Strengthen Inter-Ministerial Collaboration...

***Formalize Inter-Ministerial Coordination:***

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| ▪ Establish a ministerial advisory committee on adult/continuing education to advise the (appropriate ministerial deputies) on matters of policy, program priorities, levels of support and administration of adult/continuing education. (FARIS) | *Tactical* | |
| ▪ Establish a standing inter-ministry co-ordination committee on adult/continuing education. (FARIS) | *Tactical* | |
| ▪ Sponsor an inter-Ministerial Task Force of relevant provincial ministries to ensure that their policies collectively support adults who wish to improve their literacy skills. (PLAC) | *Tactical* | |
| ▪ Encourage the development of a process that allows ministers responsible for adult basic education to meet formally to establish goals, review progress and assess new information. (ABC/1) | *Tactical* | |

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| ▪ Create a BC Government Standing Committee on Literacy and Related Issues to: 1) promote internal government collaboration across all Ministries for which some aspect of literacy is an issue; 2) develop a common and integrated approach to literacy and related issues throughout the province so as to streamline the delivery of services, close existing service gaps, and increase overall effectiveness for dollars spent. (BPUC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ (Appoint) an ongoing Provincial Literacy Advisory Council to address literacy issues, to oversee the awarding of grants, to monitor and report regularly on the progress of the literacy strategy. (PLAC) | *Tactical* |
| ***Outcomes and Protocols:*** | |
| ▪ Work (with appropriate ministries) to ensure that resources and training activities to promote student-centered curriculum, learning materials, teaching methods, and evaluations ... (and)... that these are also available to literacy instructors and tutors working in school district adult programs. (PLAC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Determine methods of overcoming complex jurisdictional issues that contribute to the current patchwork of programs and services and inhibit the emergence of a coherent strategy for adult basic education. (ABC/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Develop and implement an inter-ministerial protocol on adult/continuing education. (FARIS) | *Strategic* |
| ***Approach to Funding:*** | |
| ▪ Develop and apply an integrated and strategic inter-Ministerial approach to funding literacy and related issues so as to more readily enable holistic, socio-economic revitalization initiatives such as "Learning Communities" (BPUC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ (Achieve) greater strategic, inter-agency collaboration. (Given the interrelationship between literacy and other social and economic issues – including health, corrections, income assistance, welfare, First Nations, children and families, etc. – responsibility for funding is unclear.) (Unsourced) | *Policy* |
| ***People with Disabilities:*** | |
| ▪ Cooperate (among appropriate ministries) to ensure that the unique learning needs of disabled people who wish to improve their literacy skills and employment potential are addressed. (PLAC) | *Policy* |

## 5. Develop a Coherent Strategy for Literacy Development Among Children...

***National Framework:***

- Strengthen the present Federal/Provincial/Territorial agreements focusing on child development and learning. (OECD/1) — *Strategic*

- Formulate a national quality framework for early childhood services across all sectors, including: 1) an outline of the knowledge, skills, dispositions and values that children at different ages can be expected to master across broad developmental areas; and 2) pedagogical guidelines outlining the processes through which children achieve these goals, and how educators should support them. (OECD/1) — *Strategic*

***Within BC...***

- Develop, with the major stakeholder groups, an early childhood strategy with priority targets, benchmarks and timelines, and with guaranteed budgets to fund appropriate governance and expansion. (OECD/1) — *Strategic*

- Build bridges between child care and kindergarten education, with the aim of integrating early childhood education both at ground level and at policy and management levels. (OECD/1) — *Strategic*

- (Make it a) key emphases that BC's provincial learning system for early childhood development should: 1) concentrate on providing best possible conditions for early learning (eg. security, nurture, stimulation, encouragement); 2) emphasize early literacy, inquiry, creativity, physical activity; and 3) emphasize family/parental involvement in early learning. (BCPB) — *Strategic*

- Ensure that all young people have a solid foundation for future learning and acquire all of the skills they will need to succeed in the knowledge-based economy, by improving the learning environment for young children. (STEP) — *Policy*

- Improve pre-natal maternal health and well-being, ensuring that pregnant women are less vulnerable because of poor nutrition, smoking, and substance abuse, since these factors have a significant impact on the educability of their children. (CEA) — *Tactical*

***Screening and Assessment:***

- Screen for developmental problems following birth to reduce the number of children who will later encounter difficult learning problems that will impair their literacy. (CEA) — *Tactical*

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| • Research children's learning "growth trajectories" to shed light on the educational and social processes that underlie the differences observed in PISA. (t may be that most of the inter-provincial differences in school performance have to do with the foundation for learning that is established during the early years and during the critical first two years of elementary school.) (Unsourced) | *Tactical* |
| ***Parental Involvement:*** | |
| ▪ Encourage parents to read to their children and provide access to quality reading material. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Require health and education agencies to make available to all new and prospective parents, the facts linking secure, nurturing, and stimulating home/family environments to strong brain development, high capacity for learning, and low incidence of behaviour disorder and incorporate these within the educational curriculums on parenting and early childhood development for all high school students. (BCPB) | *Tactical* |
| ***Reduce Barriers:*** | |
| ▪ Increase the opportunity and readiness to learn across social groups by providing subsidized high quality childcare and other pre-school environments, especially for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Raise the level of financial support to poor families with children. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Develop distance learning for remote or non-institutional access. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Promote and support more literacy initiatives with public libraries. (PAN/1) | *Strategy* |
| ***Children with Special Needs***: | |
| ▪ Include children with special educational needs in public early development services. (OECD/1) | *Tactical* |
| ***Aboriginal Children:*** | |
| ▪ (Make) more direct investments in literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal children and youth. (HRDC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Find effective approaches to providing education to Aboriginal children and employment to Aboriginal families living in urban areas. (OECD/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Undertake focused educational research with Aboriginal children, with the fullest data possible on their educational outcomes (not just enrolments) and provide ongoing support at all levels of education. (OECD/1) | *Strategic* |

## 6. Develop a Coherent Strategy for Literacy Development Among Youth...

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| ***Overall Framework:*** | |
| ▪ Pursue the goals of excellence and equity in learning outcomes for all children (CEA) | *Policy* |
| ***Screening, Assessment, and Intervention:*** | |
| ▪ Identify and support children who are struggling to read (CEA) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Provide access to diagnostic and remedial services (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Implement a thoughtful assessment system (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ***Learner-Centered System Reforms:*** | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Reduce class sizes in primary grades (CEA) | |
| ▪ Develop a strong and demanding curriculum (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Provide access to a wide range of learning resources (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Create a classroom climate that is conducive to learning (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Revise curriculum so it is more relevant and applied, less academic. (POWER) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Develop a more holistic and interdisciplinary approach to teaching so as to make the content of what is taught relevant to the workplace – and the interests of the student. (POWER) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Adapt learning methodologies to the learner; support more flexible, interactive, and experiential learning. (POWER) | *Strategic* |
| • Assemble a detailed account of the intended and enacted curriculum differences between high-performing Quebec and other provinces. | *Tactical* |
| • Collect better data on how school policy, practices, processes and resources, effect changes in school performance. | *Tactical* |
| • Rigorously assess the impact of school-wide reform efforts. | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Develop distance learning for remote or non-institutional access. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |

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| ▪ Promote and support more literacy initiatives with public libraries. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ***Professional Development:*** | |
| ▪ Raise teacher expectations with respect to the capacity of children and youth to become literate | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Ensure that teachers, particularly primary teachers, receive specialized preparation in reading instruction. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ***Parental Involvement:*** | |
| ▪ (Make it a) key emphases that the provincial learning system for the Grade 4-12 group should include a focus on parental involvement and responsibility for student learning. (BCPB) | *Strategic* |
| ***Aboriginals***: | |
| ▪ Increase direct investments in literacy and numeracy for Aboriginal children and youth. (HRDC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Engage with Aboriginal communities in a culture of learning that encourages students to succeed in their educational goals and monitor year over year improvements in student performance on Foundation Skills Assessments and in relation to graduation rates. (BCPB) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Direct a marketing campaign at Aboriginal youth urging them to stay in school or return to school, and to avail themselves of employment opportunities arising from the 2010 Games, infrastructure projects, regional community projects, and demographic challenges in many sectors. (MHR) | *Tactical* |
| ***Immigrants:*** | |
| ▪ Provide opportunities for students whose first language is neither English nor French to acquire full literacy in at least one official language. (CEA) | *Principle* |
| ***School to Work Transition:*** | |
| ▪ Explore and develop incentives that would encourage industry (business and labour) to invest in literacy and lifelong learning strategies – particularly as they relate to school-to-work transition programs, workforce skills upgrading, and broader community development and revitalization. (BPUC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Make "work studies" and other experience-with-work programs more widely available at the elementary and secondary school levels. (STEP) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Build stronger linkages between schools and the world of work. (STEP) | *Strategic* |

- Attract more young people to apprenticeship programs. (STEP) — *Tactical*

- (Work together with) industry and education groups ... to produce a youth-oriented summary of "Where the Opportunities Lie" for distribution to secondary schools. Its purpose would be to raise awareness amongst secondary students of the industries and occupations in which demand is anticipated to be greatest, and develop understanding of the career path potential with these jobs. (MHR) — *Tactical*

- Provide adequate funding for career prep and counselling, transitional programming, vocational and trades and technical training. (POWER) — *Tactical*

- Assist educators to gain awareness, understanding, and experience around the contemporary work world. (POWER) — *Tactical*

- Assist employers in building bridges between school and work: agreeing to participate on educational advisory boards; participating in more co-op, mentorship and job-shadowing programs; be willing to give students on-the-job experience. (POWER) — *Tactical*

- Overcome biases about certain kinds of work (eg. preconceived negative notions of apprenticeships, trades, and technical careers) among parents. (POWER) — *Tactical*

## 7. Develop a Coherent Strategy for Literacy Development Among Adults...

***Overall Framework:*** — *Principle*

- Develop a strategic and integrated plan for post-secondary education and training in the province. (POWER)

***Learner-Centered System Reforms:***

- Require the boards of all institutions providing adult/continuing education programs to create and make public an Adult Guarantee to their students. (FARIS) — *Tactical*

- Undertake cooperative efforts to increase the portability of credentials in order to improve mobility of both students and workers and to increase the effectiveness of pre-employment and promotion screening. (CEA) — *Tactical*

- Address issues of concern for adults (in the Rivers research), including (CPSE): — *Strategic*

  - flexibility of programming
  - importance of assessment and testing

- need for counselling
- day care
- life skills, and other support services for adults
- services for adults with special needs
- access to science labs and math courses

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| ▪ Improve curricula, instructional and assessment methods for adult literacy. (CEA) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Ensure adults have the same right as youth to quality provision, including curriculum, materials and methods which are relevant – and support services which are accessible. (FARIS) | *Principle* |
| ▪ Make available an array of learning opportunities so that adults may learn at the times, in the places, and in the manner which suits their learning styles whether it be by means of traditional classes, cooperative learning groups, flexible open learning techniques or combinations thereof. (FARIS) | *Policy* |
| ▪ Fully support all efforts to follow, implement, and expand on learner-centered strategies and "best practices" and form a provincial group or task force to further discuss, strategize, and report back with recommendations on some key challenges. (BPUC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Continue to support adult literacy resources that promote student-centered curriculum, materials development, teaching methods and evaluation, including distance education formats. (PLAC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Provide lower instructor-student ratios in literacy programs in colleges. (PLAC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Ensure college and institute continuing education activity is relevant to economic, cultural and social needs of the province and the people of its regions (CPSE - Day) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Encourage a diversity of programming, delivery and support models, including workplace basic skills, family literacy programs, distance learning and specialized approaches geared to those in the critical school-to-work transition years (ages 16-24) and those over the age of 45. (ABC/1) | *Strategic* |

***Improved Access:***

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| ▪ Consider, in cooperation with provinces and territories and other partners, targeted skills development initiatives to help persons with disabilities, Aboriginal people, visible minorities, individuals with low levels of literacy or foundation skills, and others facing particular barriers to participation in the labour market. (HRDC) | *Strategic* |

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| ▪ Ensure each college identifies as part of its regional literacy plan the population in its region who are potential literacy students and how it will measure and assure accessibility of programs for those potential students through some community agency. (PLAC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Establish the means by which prior learning assessment can be applied to the status, accreditation and career development of adult trainers and educators (CPSE - Day) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Make available comprehensive, flexible and accessible training opportunities for adult educators and trainers in all sectors throughout the province (CPSE - Day) | *Policy* |
| ▪ Cooperatively plan and deliver literacy and upgrading programs within all correctional institutions and half-way houses in the province. (PLAC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Develop distance learning for remote or non-institutional access. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Promote and support more literacy initiatives with public libraries. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ***Aboriginals:*** | |
| ▪ Implement adult education, better apprenticeship training, workplace training and measures to improve employability skills for Aboriginal Canadians. (HRDC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Develop comprehensive training-to-employment plans, including the use of innovative methods such as prior learning assessments, workplace literacy programs and e-learning to improve adult basic education systems and investments in Aboriginal post-secondary education. (HRDC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Help Aboriginal communities address their special learning and skills development needs, particularly with respect to the knowledge-intensive areas of the economy. (STEP) | *Strategic* |
| ***People with Disabilities::*** | |
| ▪ Require assessment procedures and counselling services in each college region to be examined and, where required, developed, improved, and expanded to emphasize the needs of undereducated adults and especially those of learning disabled adults. (Unsourced) | *Strategic* |
| ***Immigrants and ESL:*** | |
| ▪ Guarantee access to language learning programs in at least one official language for adult speakers of languages other than English and French. (CEA) | *Policy* |
| ▪ Develop tools to assess prior learning and experience, particularly for immigrants, in order to establish equivalent credentials. (CEA) | *Tactical* |

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| ▪ Improve labour force mobility through greater portability of credentials across provincial boundaries, along with better recognition of the skills of immigrants. (HRDC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Assess level and duration of ESL language instruction. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Eliminate wait lists and restrictive criteria for entry into English language training. (PLAC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Expand the quantity and diversity of adult English language training for those in need. (PLAC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Give priority to provision of language training to newcomers shortly after arrival in Canada. (PLAC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Address the ESL needs of immigrant communities in college ESL programs, including, the elimination of waiting lists; more full-time year-round classes with sustained funding; more classes for specific groups. (PLAC) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Address the "essential" or "great" need for improvement to curriculum, equipment, materials, resources, instructional staffing, and administrative capacities of respondents' ESL programs ... (and also)... program support services (particularly child and day care), various kinds of counselling, financial aid, facilities (especially classroom space), several aspects of program delivery (eg. class size, scheduling, student assessment, programming for specific purposes or groups), relations with other forms of adult education including government agencies, immigrant services, and local communities, and teacher certification and professional development. (CPSE – Cumming) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Realize a potentially seamless ESL system by creating a single, coordinated and integrated system that would ... enhance communication between MCAWS and AVED and the creation of mechanisms for joint planning to address issues and gaps in a coordinated manner; provide smooth transitions for learners between ELSA and college-based ESL programs and within the college-based system; partnerships among service providers such as immigrant-serving agencies, colleges, school districts, and the private sector for the provision of ESL training with each agency contributing its expertise in particular areas; partnerships among government, public, private, post secondary, professional associations, business, and industry sectors to facilitate a smooth transition for learners on the path between English language training, job skills training, and employment; and linkages with the Ministry of Education. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Enhance transparency through MCAWS and AVED by more clearly communicating funding criteria and decisions to service providers. (ESL) | *Strategic* |

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| ▪ Ensure stable funding to service providers over a longer term and consider strategies to address the "economy of scale" issues in rural and small communities to support ESL delivery with limited number of learners. (ESL) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Consider innovative alternatives for providing financial support for learners and/or enhancing communication strategies about the distribution of funds. (ESL) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Reinstate base funding to support school district ESL service delivery. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Determine if the use of a common assessment tool such as the CLBA would have benefits for learners and result in greater efficiency and effectiveness – and consider the potential value of an integrated assessment process for both ELSA and college-based ESL. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Determine whether increased counseling support for learners can be integrated into the initial placement assessment so that a broader range of learner needs for information and support can be addressed in a "one-stop shop" (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Consider how to reduce significant barriers to accessing ESL programs, including: undertaking a more proactive promotion of ESL programs; balancing supply and demand for literacy classes; more effectively accommodating special needs learners in the system; providing support services such as child minding and transportation; examining perceived inequities in tuition fees and other related ESL costs for learners; accommodating the need for ESL instruction related to settlement and adjustment for naturalized Canadians; introducing a wider range of delivery modes and more flexible scheduling of all ESL classes to better meet the diverse needs of the adult ESL population. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Establish within AVED and MCAWS and MHR improved lines of communication to facilitate removing barriers for immigrants or naturalized Canadians who require ESL instruction while on some form of social assistance. (ESL) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Consider how programs might effectively and efficiently bridge the gap between ELSA level 3 and employment, higher level training, or more advanced education. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Enhance labour market and combined skills language training by: providing incentives to service providers to increase the delivery of combined skills training; partnerships with the employment sector; language training for a wider range of professions and careers; liaisons and partnerships with professional and trade associations. (ESL) | *Tactical* |

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| • Achieve consistency in learner assessment and evaluation and develop common curriculum guidelines within the ESL delivery system, versus acknowledging and respecting service provider flexibility and autonomy to meet the unique needs of their client base by: developing consistent curriculum guidelines outlining philosophy, learning outcomes and resources; using the Canadian Language Benchmarks as a standard for instruction and assessment; coordinating a process for sharing expertise in assessment, evaluation, and materials design; promoting and supporting a wider range of delivery modes to meet diverse client needs; researching and developing activities to enhance best practices. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| • Enhance professional development for ESL instructors in such areas as literacy, skill-based training, and testing. (ESL) | *Strategic* |
| • Balance the requirement for outcomes measurements that are reliable and useful for long term planning with the needs of providers to have measurement frameworks that are "user friendly" and not too time-consuming including: identifying measures that are realistic, achievable and which acknowledge the diversity of programs and client needs; clearly communicating expectations related to accountability and evaluation; supporting service providers to implement outcomes and accountability measures; coordinating ELSA and college-based demographic and program data that would be accessible to funders and providers for long-range planning and program evaluation. (ESL) | *Tactical* |
| ***Intergenerational:*** | |
| • Support family literacy programs that seek to simultaneously improve the literacy levels of multiple generations. (CEA) | *Strategic* |
| ***Workplace Programming Incentives and Strategies:*** | |
| • Introduce tax policies to reduce the cost of reading materials. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| • Offer incentives for firms to offer more training, including literacy training. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| • Explore and develop incentives that would encourage industry (business and labour) to invest in literacy and lifelong learning strategies – particularly as they relate to school-to-work transition programs, workforce skills upgrading, and broader community development and revitalization. (BPUC) | *Strategic* |
| • Examine with partners possible financial incentives for employers who support essential skills development for their employees. (HRDC) | *Tactical* |
| • Give tax breaks and other incentives for business to engage in more training. (POWER) | *Tactical* |

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| • Encourage partnerships among business groups, the Conference Board of Canada, Literacy BC, and governments to hold literacy "best practices" forums in BC. (BCCC) | *Tactical* |
| • Sponsor a Learning Summit every two years focusing on the development of partnerships between industry, communities, and educational institutions to foster workforce education and lifelong learning experiences for all British Columbians. (BCPB) | *Tactical* |
| • Recognize sector councils are an effective mechanism for delivering essential skills programming, and aupport workplace and career development practitioners who develop and implement this training. (HRDC) | *Tactical* |
| • Use sector councils as a forum where unions and management can work together to meet their respective and collective needs, enabling unions to identify skill requirements and develop training programs that help union members – which, in turn, leads to skills upgrading in the current work force, which benefits the employer. (HRDC) | *Tactical* |
| • Help people change their attitudes so that they recognize ... the importance of having and using workplace appropriate skills, attitudes, and behavior... (and) combine employability skills with technical and business management competencies. (CONNECTIONS) | *Strategic* |
| • Undertake training and employability skills development initiatives in conjunction with job placement programs. (Training and employability skills development, by itself, is not particularly effective in helping income assistance recipients make successful, long-term labour market transitions.) (CONNECTIONS) | *Strategic* |
| • Build a dedicated Workforce Literacy website; profile Workforce Literacy as an issue at the Business Council's annual leadership Conference on Addressing Skills Shortages; continue the current Business Council – led momentum with another project, including Regional Forums in eight communities; investigate the wisdom of a broader based program. (BCBC) | *Tactical* |
| • (Encourage employers and unions) to support efforts by employees and members to improve their skills and reward them for success. (ABC/2) | *Tactical* |
| • (Encourage employers and unions) to negotiate terms and conditions of employment that make it possible and realistic for employees to engage in upgrading programs. (ABC/2) | *Tactical* |
| • Help employers, particularly SMEs, to upgrade the skills of their employees and managers. (STEP) | *Strategic* |

- Fund appropriate bodies to investigate human resource development needs, including literacy requirements of specific industrial sectors. (CEA)

*Tactical*

- Enrich workplaces so they are more of a learning culture; provide incentives for employees to learn; provide childcare and other benefits that support their learning; provide onsite learning centres and resources. (POWER)

*Strategic*

## 8. Engage Public Support...

- Raise awareness and promote understanding of literacy issues. (HRDC)

*Strategic*

***Strategic Messaging:***

- Reconcile the "disconnects" in our own definitions of literacy; agree on messaging that reconciles the two most problematic "disconnects": grade level vs. continuum notions of literacy; and literacy as a socio-economic rather than a philanthropic "gave at the office" issue. (BPUC)

*Strategic*

- Develop and implement a comprehensive and integrated approach to communicating about and promoting issues relating to literacy, including (BPUC):

  - create umbrella messaging about "literacy and lifelong learning" that all can use consistently and thus speak with the same voice
  - create more precise messaging around specific aspects of literacy that resonate particularly well for specific audiences or in specific contexts – but that relate back to and are complementary with our overall messaging about "literacy and lifelong learning"

*Tactical*

- Fully embrace and accommodate the complexity of literacy issues in our messaging; develop discreet and targeted messages to fully reflect, embrace, and accommodate the complexity of the issue so that everyone who needs to, understands and appreciates its importance. (BPUC)

*Tactical*

- Be diligent in our approach to collecting, promoting, and using IALS data, including continuing to communicate IALS findings as an integral part of the communications strategy about the issue but be cautious in the over-use and over-statement of the data; place more emphasis on the implications of the findings rather than on the precise percentages of Canadians at Levels 1, 2, and 3 (BPUC)

*Tactical*

***Measure Outcomes:***

- Continue benchmarking awareness: track awareness and understanding around literacy issues on a regular basis so as to provide at least one indicator of the effectiveness of the communications strategies undertaken in the future. (BPUC)

*Tactical*

## 9. Increase the Magnitude of Investment...

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| ***Overall Framework:*** | |
| ▪ Recognize literacy is significantly under-resourced and expand funding within a strategic 5 year plan. (Unsourced) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Provide ways to mitigate financial problems such as the provision of income replacement programs and offsetting expenses. (ABC/2) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Provide solutions to family responsibilities that include provision of childcare and eldercare and the potential for participation by families. (ABC/2) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Study means of reducing/eliminating student waiting lists through addressing the financial and staffing issues associated with meeting the current and future demands for service. (ABC/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Assess resource requirements and means of providing access to all literacy and upgrading programs up to and including high school completion, regardless of learner's age. (ABC/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Consider program funding/support that allows for and requires best practices relating to the training of intake and referral workers; assessment procedures and program evaluation; effective follow-up with potential learners; and assessment of learner support-service requirements. (ABC/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Offer low interest rates for student loans. (POWER) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Investigate provision of on-site childcare and/or promote partnerships with community-based childcare providers, to offer learners effective childcare options. (ABC/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Increase direct funding for adult literacy and basic education programs. (CEA) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Increase access to and participation in post-secondary education, including reducing the cost of attendance through reasonable tuition costs, tax credits and provide better access to needs-based financial assistance for post-secondary education. (CEA) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Provide traditional education institutions the necessary resources to do their job. (BPUC) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Increase support for education and training among recent immigrants, learning disabled students, aboriginal youth, at-risk youth, women, and visible minorities. (POWER) | *Strategic* |

***Specific Streams:*** *Strategic*

- Develop a sanctioned community literacy stream for direct government funding. (Unsourced)

*Strategic*

- Develop integrated and realistic funding strategies., including: (BPUC):

  - replace limited, short-term, project-based funding – at least in part – with longer-term sustainable funding
  - allow for direct delivery
  - provide for "access-related costs" (transportation, childcare) associated with full learner participation

*Tactical*

- Make workplace literacy grants available where necessary for employers or trade unions or groups of employers of workers to design and deliver literacy programs. (PLAC)

*Tactical*

- Continue to set aside funds for the purposes of funding innovative demonstration projects and other projects to be cost-shared with the (appropriate federal) ministries and agencies. (PLAC)

*Tactical*

- Make available provincial funds to community organizations and non-profit societies working in cooperation with the outreach worker of the college and the community advisory committee for the design and delivery of literacy programs appropriate to the needs of the particular groups they serve. (PLAC)

*Strategic*

- Work with educational institutions, community agencies, and other governmental ministries to ensure the elimination of financial barriers which hinder access to learning. (PLAC)

- Make available provincial funds for a variety of ongoing professional development activities and training events for literacy instructors, coordinators, tutors and learners in the provinces, especially in the area of learning disabilities. (PLAC) *Strategic*

***Funding and Evaluation Criteria:*** *Strategic*

- Collaborate on meaningful accountability models; engage representatives of funding sources and service providers in a review of the evaluative criteria of programs so as to make them more flexible, rigorous, and meaningful. (BPUC)

**As Well As... Lobby with the Federal Government:**
**(To encourage its implementation of previously-recommended actions.)**

***Government Services:***

- Take inventory of all federal government programs using a literacy lens. Call for plain language usage in government, legal proceedings etc. and a coherent approach to education regarding the use of technology were also emphasized, starting with creating a learning culture in the federal public service itself. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

***Pan-Canadian Accord:***

- Make lifelong learning a national priority and ensure that all policies related to education and training support that objective. (STEP) — *Policy*
- Arrange a meeting between the Minister of HRDC meet and provincial/territorial ministers of education to develop a pan-Canadian accord on literacy and numeracy skills development. (If unanimous agreement is not possible, the federal government should work with individual provinces and territories to achieve separate accords that satisfy constitutional requirements and limitations.) (PAN/1) — *Strategic*
- Work with the provinces and territories to redirect some of the Youth Employment Strategy funds to create a "learn and earn" initiative towards high school completion. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*
- Include literacy and numeracy skills development as key components of the comprehensive agreement currently being negotiated with the provinces ad territories to remove barriers to participation in work ad learning for persons with disabilities include. (PAN/1) — *Strategic*
- Work with the provincial and territorial governments, as part of a pan-Canadian Accord on literacy and numeracy skills development, to ensure that enough resources are available to meet inmates' needs across the country including transition to community literacy on release. (PAN/1 — *Strategic*
- Implement, subject to agreement with the provinces and territories, a two-year pilot project that offers small and medium-sized businesses an Employment Insurance premium rebate and other incentives such as tax credits to cover the costs of providing workplace literacy and numeracy skills development to employees. Following the completion of this pilot project, an evaluation should be conducted and if the project is deemed successful, it should be extended to all employers, with a continuing emphasis on small and medium-sized businesses. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*
- Pursue federal and provincial cooperation in research and evaluation. (Unsourced) — *Principle*

***Aboriginals:***

- Create as part of the new Aboriginal Literacy Strategy, a new NLS Aboriginal Funding Stream (in addition to the approximately $2 million currently being spent) of $5 million. Half the money should be used to bolster existing funding and the other half to the national Aboriginal literacy organization currently being designed. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Allocate $15 million to supplementary Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreements to fund workplace literacy initiatives. A portion of the $25 million over the next two years for the Aboriginal Skills and Employment Partnership should be earmarked for literacy ad numeracy skills development. All federal programs aimed at increasing labour market participation of Aboriginal peoples should include basic education upgrading and literacy programs. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Consult with Aboriginal communities and provincial and territorial governments to develop an Aboriginal Literacy strategy that: incorporates a holistic approach; respects Aboriginal languages, traditions and values; and is funded at a level commensurate with the seriousness of the problem of low literacy among Aboriginal peoples. (PAN/1) — *Strategic*

- Include basic skills education upgrading and literacy programs in all federal programs aimed at increasing labour market participation of Aboriginal peoples in Canada. (HRDC) — *Policy*

***Federal Policy Framework:***

- Formulate a literacy policy applicable to all federal departments and agencies and establish a clear program of objectives and goals. (PAN/1) — *Policy*

***Resource Allocations and Priorities:***

- Increase the NLS annual grants and contributions budget from$28.2 million to $50 million, not including new funding for the Aboriginal Funding Stream. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Allocate one-third of the increase in funding to multi-year projects to assess the impact of stable funding on the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Restore within NLS its Literacy Corps budget to $1 million starting in 2004-2005. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Allocate funds through the NLS to encourage greater use of prior learning assessments. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

- Collaborate with other levels of government to develop a learning portfolio that records progress and respects privacy. Not necessarily restricted to low literacy learners, this project could be extended to newcomers as well. (PAN/1) — *Tactical*

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| ▪ Be sensitive within NLS to Francophones IALS tells us have lower literacy levels than Anglophones. (PAN/1) | *Principle* |
| ▪ Develop within NLS clear, measurable goals, objectives and performance indicators for assessing individual literacy and numeracy skills. These measures should become part of annual performance reports. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Continue to provide sufficient financial support for the pan-Canadian assessment of students' literacy skills. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Allocate some of NLS new resources for stable funding to literacy projects for persons with learning disabilities. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Provide funding for supplementary services, such as transportation and childcare to support newcomers' access to instruction. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Continue to promote and develop partnerships within NLS that pool resources to create opportunities for workplace literacy. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Assess through NLS how much demand exceeds supply. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| ▪ Increase funding for sector councils as leverage to urge councils to develop strategies for essential skills development within the workplace skills development specific to their sector. (MCL) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Increase spending under Part II of the Employment Insurance Act by $100 million. Subject to the terms of a pan-Canadian accord on literacy and numeracy skills development, the government should negotiate supplementary Labour Market Development Agreements and enact the necessary changes to the Employment Insurance Act to provide literacy and numeracy skills development assistance to all unemployed and employed individuals, irrespective of their historical attachment to Employment Insurance. These supplementary agreements should ensure that a certain proportion of funding is made available to address the literacy needs of members of designated groups. Seventy-five percent of the increases in Part II funding shold be allocated to supplementary Labour Market Development Agreements, while the remaining 25% should be allocated to addressing workplace literacy needs as identified by sector councils. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| ▪ Expand the budget ($23.8 million in 2003-2004) of the Opportunities Fund for Persons with Disabilities by $5 million and dedicate additional funding to literacy and numeracy skills development. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |

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| • Review Citizenship and Immigration Canada budget for Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada. (PAN/1) | *Tactical* |
| • Allocate sufficient resources from within the federal government to provide literacy awards. (PAN/1) | *Principle* |
| • Include literacy research in the mandate of the Canadian Learning Institute without reducing the National Literacy Secretariat's annual budget or capabilities. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| • Expand support for community learning and family literacy partnerships. (PAN/1) | *Strategic* |
| • Implement a two-year pilot project that offers small and medium-sized businesses an Employment Insurance premium rebate and other incentives such as tax credits to cover the costs of providing workplace literacy and numeracy skills development to employees. (HRDC) | *Tactical* |

** So as to strip out the most meaningful strategies to flag as priority recommendations in this report, the Panel attempted to categorize each of these past recommendations as one of the following categories:

***Principle***: A fundamental tenet or belief on which policy is based.

***Policy***: A commitment to act in direction-setting ways that reflect and honour principle(s) – without necessarily implying specific actions.

***Strategy***: Specific approach to implementing a policy in the most impactful way, framed in "what to achieve" rather than "how to achieve it" terms.

***Tactic***: One among many alternative "how to's" for implementing a strategy – any of which could be replaced with another, different tactic.